

Hafa Adai!

IPI resolves issues with payroll. **PAGE 2**

Muña supports reopening the CNMI in mid-June. **PAGE 3**

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Nine firefighters are sacked

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Service issued walking papers yesterday to nine personnel who continue

» **Mendiola stands firm on mandatory vaccination**

to defy a directive to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Of the initial 23 individuals who signed a petition against the mandatory vaccination, nine were issued termination notices yesterday, effective immediately.

“Unfortunately, the nine refused to take the vaccine so we went ahead and served the termination effective today. We got the Attorney General’s

Office to review the adverse action, the Office of Personnel Management too to make sure we’re within the confines of the law, and we served those adverse actions today,” said DFEMS Commissioner Dennis Mendiola.

He said the petition originally started off with 23 individuals refusing to be vaccinated but when the department put them on administrative See **FIRE** on Page 4

US colleges divided over requiring student vaccinations

By COLLIN BINKLEY
AP EDUCATION WRITER

BOSTON (AP)—U.S. colleges hoping for a return to normalcy next fall are weighing how far they should go in urging students to get the COVID-19 vaccine, including whether they should—or legally can—require it.

Universities including Rutgers, Brown, Cornell and See **COLLEGES** on Page 4



‘Stimulus payments go out as planned’

Luella I. Marciano shows four stimulus checks for her four family members that she picked up from her box at the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa yesterday afternoon. Marciano said she, however, did not see her check so she will come back to the post office either today, Tuesday, or the next day.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The issuance of stimulus funds to over

31,000 taxpayers, either via direct deposit or paper checks, went out as planned yesterday, according to Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig.

“No challenges encountered,” said Atalig in response to *Saipan Tribune’s* inquiry about the payments of the See **STIMULUS** on Page 4

US Army medical professional tests positive

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

An asymptomatic U.S. Army medical professional who entered the CNMI last April 1 to help the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. with its vaccination drive tested positive for COVID-19 last April 6.

The Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office said the Army medical professional, who entered the CNMI on April 1, was confirmed positive for COVID-19 last April 6, during the mandatory testing on the person’s fifth day in the CNMI.

According to the JRM news See **ARMY** on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 5pm, April 12, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	16,780
Fully Vaccinated:	12,340
Moderna	
Initiated:	2,479
Fully Vaccinated:	1,934
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	49

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,830	3	7,833
Recovered	7,666	4	7,670
Active	24	3	27
Deaths	136	0	136
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			144,499

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	160	0	160
Traced via Travel Screening	124	0	124
Traced via Community Screening	36	0	36
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			27

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Unique Shop in Su-supe has restocked itself with toys and other knickknacks from floor to ceiling.

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ASIA

China’s top disease control official admits the effectiveness of its coronavirus vaccines is low.

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LIFE & STYLE

“Nomadland” wins four prizes including best picture at the British Academy Film Awards.

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Local

IPI resolves issues with payroll

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has encountered issues with the distribution of payroll 8 that was due last week but the matter has already been resolved.

According to a status report IPI lawyer Michael Dotts filed with the U.S. District Court for the NMI, there was an issue with the wire

transfer from Hong Kong, resulting in the late transfer of funds.

Fortunately, IPI ended up paying payroll in cash and the full payroll was distributed on time and IPI is on track to pay payroll 9 on time, April 23.

Meanwhile, IPI employee housing still has power and food services continue for all its H-2B workers without interruption. IPI has no repatriations to report. All construc-

tion work at the IPI Resort in Garapan remains suspended.

Dotts informed the court that IPI continues to work with the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's field office on paying the balance of the consent judgment.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, IPI has already made its first settlement payment to the U.S. Department of Labor amounting to \$164,270.08.

Last March 29, U.S. District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona approved the amended consent judgment

between IPI and USDOL that allows IPI to pay off in installments the amount it owes USDOL in a previous consent

judgment. That effectively suspended Manglona's previously ordered receivership for the casino developer.

Kumagai assumes battalion CSM post

By **BEA CABRERA**
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CORRESPONDENT

Saipan-born Joseph Ryoichi DeLeon Guerrero Kumagai of the U.S. Army was promoted early this month to take on the responsibility of Battalion Command Sergeant Major of the 3rd Battalion 196th Infantry

in Guam. As CSM, Kumagai is in charge of providing support and advises other commanding officers from battalion level and up.

The mission of the 3rd Battalion, 196th Infantry Brigade is to provide professional, high quality, and responsive training support to reserve component units in Guam, Saipan, and Tinian to sustain or improve unit pre-mobilization readiness in the areas of operational capability, logistics, and administration to perform the commander in chief missions.

According to Kumagai's wife, Alvilynn, her husband, who is the son of the late Tadao Kumagai and late Rosario (Familian Ojisan), served the Army Reserve on Saipan



Kumagai

for five years from 1990 to 1995, entered active duty in November 1995 and is still serving the nation up to now.

Kumagai graduated from Marianas High School in 1991 and finished his One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning, Georgia as an infantryman in September.

"We have been married for 14 wonderful years. We have eight children (Joseph Jr., Keoki, Justin Ray, Vianna, Kikowa, Keanu, Alveah-Jo, and Javin), five grandchildren (Kainoa, Jordan, Kekonakai, Kaelyn, Kylie-Analeigh, and Aiden) and our family continues to grow. ...It's a blessing to be closer to home and having our youngest who is 3 years old learn the culture," she added.

Kumagai started his illustrious military career as a member of the 100th BN, 442D INF (Saipan) from 1990 to 1995, where he served as a rifleman and Team Leader. "He entered active duty in November of 1995 and was given various assignments that includes Rifleman, SAW Gunner, Team Leader and Sniper Squad Leader 3rd BN 187th INF, Fort Campbell, KY. CSM Kumagai went on to serve with the 1st BN 28th INF and the 120th AG BN, at Ft. Jackson, SC as a Basic Combat Training Drill Sergeant and Fitness Training Unit Drill Sergeant," Alvilynn Kumagai said.

"After being on Drill Sergeant duty, Kumagai was assigned to a dependent restricted tour in South Korea with the 2nd Infantry Division

as Operations Sergeant in the Division G3 Operations. He then joined the 82nd ABN Division and served as Platoon Sergeant with C Co & HHC 1st BN 508th PIR, deploying to Afghanistan in 2007. He received orders for a Recovery Team Sergeant position with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in Hawaii, where he was part of the recovery efforts to repatriate missing-in-action Americans from our nation's past conflicts," she added.

Over the years, Kumagai kept reaping promotions, assignments and earning his degree. In 2013, he was assigned

to A Co 1st BN 502nd INF as the Company First Sergeant and deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom XV. While deployed, he was selected to attend the USASMA

where he earned his associate in applied science degree in Administrative/Management Studies from Excelsior College and the rank of Sergeant Major. In August of 2016, Kumagai was assigned as the Operations SGM for the IRON Rakkasans, 3rd Battalion, 187th IN. Kumagai deployed with Task Force Iron in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel as the Task Force Operations Sergeant Major.

"Three years ago, Kumagai assumed responsibilities of 1st Battalion 187th Infantry Regiment, 3 BCT, 101st Airborne Division in Fort Campbell Kentucky, where he served for 28 months as the battalion CSM. In February 2020, Kumagai relinquished his command and served as the 3BCT Rakkasans Operations SGM until March 2021.

Aside from several military promotions, Kumagai also prides himself with skill badges that he has earned that includes the Air Assault Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, and the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge.

"His military career is everything to him. He doesn't have a typical 9-to-5 job. There may be late nights, sometimes weekends or even long months due to training, but that's part of his job. With that, he knows I got his back and we have an understanding that no matter the distance or the length of time, we always have each other," Alvilynn Kumagai said.



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FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 12,291, STOCK #: SP21P0057
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 11,643, STOCK #: SP21P0059
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 12,628, STOCK #: SP21P0058
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 14,555, STOCK #: SP21P00514
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 14,153, STOCK #: SP21P0061
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 13,323, STOCK #: SP21P0055
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
Mileage: 11,911, STOCK #: SP21P0060
FWD, 1-Speed CVT w/OD
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Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muna, left, and CHCC Corporate Quality and Performance Management manager Halina Palacios observe an orientation briefing for incoming U.S. Army medics, assigned to 25th Infantry Division, who will support CHCC's vaccination team in administering COVID-19 vaccines to local community members on Saipan.

U.S. NAVY/BRAD RUSZALA

Muña supports reopening NMI borders by mid-June

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

With the anticipated date to reopen the CNMI's borders to international visitors by mid-June, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña agrees that it is possible if 80% of the CNMI's population is vaccinated by then.

Speaking at a radio news briefing last Friday, April 9, Muña said that once the CNMI gets 80% of its population vaccinated, that's when they can be sure that the CNMI can open its borders. The CNMI is ratcheting up its vaccination process as a means to hasten the CNMI's achievement of herd immunity to COVID-19. Herd immunity is when an enough number of a population is vaccinated against a disease, providing a form of protection for those who are unvaccinated.

Speaking at the same radio news briefing, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said they are anticipating the reopening of the CNMI's borders either in May or June because they want to have at least 80% of the community already vaccinated against COVID-19.

Muña said CHCC has removed "all barriers" for everyone to get the COVID-19 vaccine, which includes the vaccination of those who are 16 years and older on all three islands—Saipan, Rota and Tinian.

"In regard to details of when we get to the 80%...I believe mid-June as the governor has stated. ...[That] target is something that we have to work together to make sure

that it happens, and to ensure that if we're going to do this, we're going to do this safe[ly]," she said.

Additionally, Muña said that just because one is already vaccinated doesn't mean that one can flout health protocols. She said she doesn't want the community to think we're completely safe.

"We're looking at this in a way [that] we have to consider our health system, we have to consider what we can take care of. ...We don't want our population to be in a situation that basically puts them at risk when we say 'Okay, it's okay...to remove the quarantine protocols,'" said Muña.

Muña reiterated that even if you are fully vaccinated, you can still get infected with COVID-19. Only the significant impact on someone's health is "reduced with the vaccination," she added.

CHCC is mindful of the health system, which is why they want to be sure that everyone has access to the vaccine and COVID-19 testing. This will help achieve the 80% herd immunity and help with making the decision to open safely.

Torres said realistically mid-June is their target, however, they have an airline that's anxious for the CNMI to reopen immediately.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Torres said they have a task force under the Governor's Economic Council of Advisers for air transportation and it has already received some suggestions from some airlines in South Korea that they are now working on.

NMTI board OK's recruiting admin staff

The Northern Marianas Technical Institute board of trustees has given NMTI interim chief executive officer Jodina Attao the green light to bring in administrative staff to ease her process of settling into her new role.

At the NMTI board of trustees special meeting last April 9, the board reviewed Attao's workload since she stepped into her interim CEO role last March 20 and then authorized her to hire new administrative staff, including a human resource officer, to alleviate her workload.

The board agreed that once a human resources officer is

appointed, s/he will assist with the contracts for staffing, plus creating the employee handbook and code of conduct.

According to NMTI board chair Mario Valentino, NMTI has enough funding to bring in at least a human resource officer, but trustee Rick Kautz noted that the hiring process is slightly different from those of the CNMI Office of Personnel Management.

After some back and forth, the board proceeded to adopt a set of rules and regulations governing the hiring of administrative staff that could be changed over the course of time. (Justine Nauta)



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EXCEPT FOR DFEMS

'90% of Executive Branch now vaccinated'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Other than the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the Executive Branch of the CNMI government has a high 90% rate of complying with mandatory vaccination for COVID-19, according to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

In fact, with the exception of some firefighters who refuse to be vaccinated and some employees who were exempted—either because of their

medical condition or because of religious reasons—the compliance rate actually approaches nearly 100%, Torres said.

“Overall, I believe other than the furloughs that were brought back, everybody is about the same high 90 percentile,” he said in response to a question about mandatory vaccination during a radio news briefing last Friday. “I believe all of them have addressed the vaccine issue. And I want to thank all, not just the departments but individually and their families,

for understanding how important this vaccination is for our community.”

Torres said that getting vaccinated is the new norm for everyone.

Torres issued a directive last February that made it mandatory for all Executive Branch employees to be vaccinated for COVID-19 as a means to prevent the spread of the virus and to ensure a healthy and safe work environment. The directive applies also to employees of semi-autonomous agencies and entities.

Under this policy, all Executive

\$10K bail for man accused of assault

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The CNMI Superior Court has imposed a \$10,000 cash bail on a man who was arrested for allegedly throwing a rock at a female companion.

At a bail hearing last Friday, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed a \$10,000 bail on Yuyan Zhang, 47, who was arrested for slapping, punching, and throwing a rock at a woman. Court documents did not indicate the relationship between Zhang and the victim.

Zhang is currently charged with assault with a dangerous weapon,

assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

After his bail hearing, Zhang was remanded to the custody of the Department of Corrections and was ordered to return to court on April 16 at 10am for a preliminary hearing, and on April 20 at 9am for his arraignment.

Zhang was represented by assistant public defender Jean P. Nogues while assistant attorney general Coleen St. Clair appeared for the government during Friday's hearing.

According to court documents, a witness told police that he saw Zhang holding the victim by her hair with his left hand and slapping her with

his right hand. The witness also said he saw Zhang punching the victim on the chest.

The witness told police that he thought Zhang “was done [assaulting the woman] because he walked away,” but then he picked up a rock and threw it at the victim.

According to the witness, Zhang punched the victim again twice in the face, and that's when the witness pushed the defendant away from the victim.

Police said they were not able to speak with the victim as she was intoxicated and had a strong odor of alcoholic beverage from her breath.

The victim had a small scratch on her bottom right lip, police added.

STIMULUS

From Page 1

third stimulus. Each taxpayer got at least \$1,400.

He said direct deposit funds were sent to Bank of Guam over the weekend and that many Bank of Guam account holders received their stimulus in their accounts. Atalig said they sent the file to Bank of Guam on Sunday so it can process the funds first thing Monday morning.

“That is why when we make the transfer of funds, BOG customers get their transfer fast because they have the same system,” he said.

Atalig said other banks will follow in the next day or two. Bank of Guam sends the file to the other banks and they have to do what they have to do

to credit their customer accounts.

“The process can take 24-48 hours for monies to hit their customer accounts,” he said.

About 10,500 taxpayers opted to receive their stimulus payments via direct deposit. That's for a total of about \$26 million.

Over 21,000 paper checks, totaling about \$40 million, were processed over the weekend and delivered to the U.S. Postal Service.

“I'd like to thank my hardworking department for their hard work in ensuring over 31,000 taxpayers were paid their stimulus checks [Monday],” Atalig said.

He reminded people that paper checks were mailed out yesterday morning (Monday) and taxpayers could expect these checks to be in their mailboxes this week or next week.

“Keep in mind, we do not control how the post office will distribute and how quickly they can have these checks in their P.O. boxes,” Atalig said.

Saipan Tribune checked at the post office in Chalan Kanoa yesterday afternoon and saw that many already got their paper checks from their respective P.O. boxes that day.

Luella I. Marciano, who was among those who checked their postal boxes yesterday afternoon, said she got four stimulus checks for her family members. She did not see her own check, so she will return to the post office either today, Tuesday, or the next day.

Marciano ran for House of Representatives precinct 2 under the Democratic Party at the November general elections.

FIRED

From Page 1

leave, 14 of the 23 consulted with family members and were advised to be vaccinated.

“This is not the time to lose jobs. It's a difficult time for the CNMI as a whole. Although it's unfortunate that this situation is going on, at the end of the day, we're going to stand firm with our community being safer,” Mendiola said.

That's a stance that Mendiola reiterated yesterday, saying he stands firm in his decision to mandate vaccination for all DFEMS personnel.

According to him, although there still isn't a 100% guarantee that the vaccine provides immunity from COVID-19, a small percentage “is better than none” and he stands firm in his decision to mandate vaccination if it gives the department and the

community a fighting chance against the epidemic.

“The [firefighters] are saying that even with the vaccine, you may or may not contract COVID but, as I stated, any percentage of not contracting COVID is better than nothing. It's a solution. At the end of the day, if it gives me a better chance to fight COVID, then I'm going to take this and I stand firm in that,” he said.

In addition, Mendiola believes getting vaccinated is part of the department's job to keep the community safe. “We're just trying to do our part to ensure that the community is safe and refusing to take the vaccine, for me, is in violation of the orders at the highest level. We're ensuring that we do our part by getting vaccinated so we can interact with the community and not worry about being the carrier of that virus,” he said.

When asked about reinstating the terminated firefighters if they decide

to be vaccinated later on, Mendiola said he would consider bringing them back as the termination has nothing to do with their work ethic.

“This action is not [against] them personally; this action is a result of them refusing to get vaccinated. It has nothing to do with their work ethic, given some of them have worked for the department 13, 14 years. Some of them are great fire fighters but, again, an order is an order and violating the governor's directive is the same as violating a judge's order and, at the end of the day, we're trained to follow orders. We follow orders and if it saves lives, then why not,” he said.

With the department out of nine firefighters, DFEMS' remaining 114 personnel are being stretched thin. Mendiola said the department and the administration are working on launching an emergency Fire Academy to fill the positions.

Branch employees are mandated to either complete the vaccination pro-

gram or obtain an approved exemption accommodation.

COLLEGES

From Page 1

Northeastern recently told students they must get vaccinated before returning to campus next fall. They hope to achieve herd immunity on campus, which they say would allow them to loosen spacing restrictions in classrooms and dorms.

But some colleges are leaving the decision to students, and others believe they can't legally require vaccinations. At Virginia Tech, officials determined that they can't because the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has only allowed the emergency use of the vaccines and hasn't given them its full approval.

The question looms large as more colleges plan to shift back from remote to in-person instruction. Many schools have launched vaccination blitzes to get students immunized before they leave for the summer. At some schools, the added requirement is meant to encourage holdouts and to build confidence that students and faculty will be safe on campus.

“It takes away any ambiguity about whether individuals should be vaccinated,” said Kenneth Henderson, the chancellor of Northeastern University in Boston. “It also provides a level of confidence for the entire community that we are taking all appropriate measures.”

Northeastern and other colleges requiring shots believe they're on solid legal ground. It's not unusual for colleges to require students to be vaccinated for other types of diseases, and a California court last year upheld a flu shot requirement at the University of California system.

But legal scholars say the COVID-19 vaccines' emergency use status moves the issue to a legal gray area that's likely to be challenged in court, and some colleges may take a more cautious approach to avoid litigation.

Harvard Law professor Glenn

Cohen, who teaches health law and bioethics, said there's no legal reason colleges wouldn't be allowed to require COVID-19 vaccinations. It makes no difference that the shots haven't been given full approval, he said, noting that many colleges already require students to take coronavirus tests that are approved under the same FDA emergency authorization. But there's also no federal guidance explicitly permitting vaccination mandates.

The biggest clashes could come in states taking a stance against vaccination requirements, he said.

In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis this month banned all businesses from requiring customers to show proof of vaccination. The order raises questions about Nova Southeastern University's plan to require students and staff to get vaccinated. The college's president said he's still confident in the plan, but he also promised to “respect the laws of our state and all federal directives.”

The governor of Texas, the country's second-largest state, issued a similar order.

There's a parallel debate about whether to require vaccination for faculty and staff, an issue that employers across the nation are grappling with. At the University of Notre Dame, one of the latest schools to require student vaccinations, shots are still optional for workers. Northeastern is considering whether to extend its mandate to employees.

Even at schools making shots mandatory, there are exemptions. Federal law requires colleges to provide accommodations to students who refuse a vaccine for medical reasons, and most schools are also offering exemptions for religious reasons.

At Brown, students who forgo shots and have no valid exemption must file a petition to study remotely or take a leave of absence next fall, the school's president, Christina Paxson, told students in a letter last week.

ARMY

From Page 1

release, the soldier was asymptomatic and had already been fully vaccinated for COVID-19. In fact, the soldier tested negative for COVID-19 before departing Hawaii.

The JRM statement said the soldier was brought to an isolation facility—the Kanoa Resort in Susupe—after testing positive for COVID-19. No additional cases were identified from the remaining 11 U.S. Army medical team. “However, out of an abundance of caution, the team is scheduled to depart [the] CNMI and is in the process of being re-assigned for potential mission support to Guam,” the JRM statement added.

The soldier who tested positive for COVID-19 will depart CNMI upon completion of the required isolation period and release by CHCC.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña confirmed in a text message that the soldier was an approved Critical Essential Traveler with mandatory active surveillance and

quarantine.

Separately, according to a Defense Visual Information Distribution Service's article, the medical team, composed of a medical officer and combat medic specialists, started administering the COVID-19 vaccine doses on Saipan last April 3.

JRM public affairs officer lieutenant commander Rick Moore also confirmed in an email that the soldier came to Saipan to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

For her part, Muña said that, as with any detected case, contact tracing starts immediately and the individual and contacts are immediately moved to the designated isolation area for monitoring, and all of the case's contacts were found to be negative and have been released.

CHCC earlier reported that an individual tested positive on the fifth day testing last April 6 that brought the CNMI's positive cases total to 160. Muña confirmed last night that the soldier was the 160th case and that all at-risk people who came in contact with this case all came back negative.

Governor hopes to see soon Hyatt's land lease extension



FERDIE DE LA TORRE
File photo shows the
Hyatt Regency Saipan in
Garapan.

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres said Friday that he wants to soon see an extension on the expiring land lease of Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan, even as the Department of Public Lands is still reviewing the proposal that Hyatt's owner had submitted.

Torres said they will hopefully have more detailed updates and approval from the Attorney General, DPL, and their Hyatt partners.

"At the end of the day, I'll continue to say that I support Hyatt

and I hope that we can continue to strengthen that partnership and hopefully see an extension of lease soon," Torres said when asked for an update on the land lease negotiation between Hyatt and the government during his radio press briefing last week.

Deveney Dela Cruz, special assistant to the DPL secretary, said last Friday that, according to DPL Real Estate director Bonnie T. Royal, the



Dela Cruz



Torres

last offer from Hyatt owner, Saipan Portopia Hotel Corp., is still being evaluated based on current regulations.

DPL Secretary Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo disclosed last December that Hyatt had already submitted all the documents that DPL needed and that they're reviewing the proposal.

Hyatt's 40-year public land lease will expire in December 2021.



****VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS NOW AVAILABLE****

**For Veterans Residing in the
Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands**

How do I make an appointment?

- Email the Guam Benefits Office at: pctc.vbahon@va.gov
- Call the Guam Benefits Office and leave a message: (671) 489-3793

Include the following:

- Your email and phone number
- First and Last Name
- Reason for Contact

(For security reasons, DO NOT include your social security number in the email/phone call)

What happens next?

A Benefits Counselor will contact you within 2-hours of leaving a message.

If your message is received after 2:30pm, or on a holiday, or on a weekend, you will be notified the next business day of your scheduled interview date/time.

In all cases, a confirmation telephone call or email will be sent to the customer.

Appointment Days/Times: Monday through Friday, 8am to 3:30pm

Benefits Counselors will be available to address Non-Health Care related inquiries related to Compensation, Pension, Survivor Benefits, Claims, Appeals, Status Requests, Etc. and assistance with the claim process.

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Kilili given lists of projects that cost almost \$5B

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) returns to the nation's capital this week carrying with him lists of CNMI projects worth almost \$5 billion in all that Gov. Ralph

DLG Torres and CNMI government agencies gave him.

Sablan, who left Saipan Sunday to return to Washington D.C., said in a Facebook post over the weekend that he will try to get as much mon-

ey as he can possibly get for CNMI infrastructure improvements for water, wastewater, airports and ports, roads, health facilities, and electricity, among others.

Sablan said his congressional office colleagues (in Wash-

ington, D.C. Rota, Saipan, and Tinian) have started the work they need to do to get the Northern Marianas as much help as they possibly can.

Last month, Sablan asked the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to provide his office information about its needs, saying the likelihood of U.S. Congress funding key infrastructure in the Marianas continues to grow.

Among the information he sought from CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho are the list of CUC projects and

costs in developing potable water, protecting water supplies and coastal waters, and reducing power costs—all in preparation should Congress loosen the federal purse strings for these types of projects.

Sablan said the American Rescue Plan that includes an estimated \$483 million for the CNMI to use for water and sewer infrastructure, among other permissible needs, is likely to be followed by an American Recovery Plan, also with significant infrastructure funding.

Sablan said in his Facebook

post over the weekend that he expects the CNMI to get additional funds for broadband improvement (bringing subsidized internet connections to homes without them), money for childcare and child development, money for programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Act, and hopefully money to build new schools or improve existing ones, and much more.

Sablan said the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee, which he chairs, will play a role in American Recovery bills.

"And I will use the little influence I have over issues that fall under the jurisdiction of my subcommittee to help both the Northern Marianas and the nation," he said.

The delegate said a family of seven—two parents and five children—will be receiving quite a substantial amount from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

First, he said, everyone in the family will qualify for and receive the third stimulus payments, totaling \$9,800.

Then there is the increased child tax credit for this family since three children are 5 years or younger and two are over 5 years old. He said the Child Tax Credit computes to \$16,800.

If Torres decides to make the monthly payments for the Child Tax Credit, Sablan said such a family will receive \$1,400 every month for 12 months.

He said Congress granted Torres the authority to do the monthly payments and gave the CNMI government \$300,000 for the administrative cost to make these monthly payments for the Child Tax Credit.

"The children shouldn't have needs for clothing, school supplies, shoes, etc.," said Sablan, who urged parents to use the Child Tax Credit money for their children's needs.

Sablan hopes the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 programs, the stimulus payments, the increased Child Tax Credit, the renter's assistance, the increased money for food assistance, the continuation of the unemployment assistance claims payments to Sept. 30 for those that lost their jobs, and so much more, would give people a chance to catch up and to have a financial bridge until the CNMI's economy rebounds in 2022 and 2023.

Helping stop the spread of COVID-19 in Guam



Pvt. 2nd Class Steven Balmonte of Dededo, Guam, is one of the many Guam National Guard soldiers and airmen who answered the call to help the island stop the spread of COVID-19.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pvt. 2nd Class Steven Balmonte of Dededo, Guam, is one of the many Guam National Guard soldiers and airmen who answered the call to help the island stop the spread of COVID-19.

With just one year of service, Balmonte has been on several missions with the Guard's COVID-19 response unit, Joint Task Force 671, to include education campaigns, traffic control at the COVID-19 testing sites, and now assisting guests at the Quarantine Facility

under Task Force Shield. He takes pride in helping the island, and feels that his efforts contribute to the front-line nurses and doctors who work hard every day saving lives.

Balmonte explains that serving locally is why he signed up for the Guard over active duty. And as the Guard supports the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services, being part of COVID-19 response helps him achieve that goal.

"Whether we're Army or

Air Force, there's no difference when we're together. We all contribute to working our part and the mission just sails smooth from there," said Balmonte. He encourages other soldiers and airmen to volunteer if they can, expressing the importance of helping the island reach 80% immunization. "Although the spread of COVID-19 will not stop, doing your part will help slow the spread and protect the people. After all, it's what we signed up for." (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

5.2-magnitude earthquake in Marianas

At 5:16am on April 12, 2021 a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred at 17.900°N 147.284°E in the Mariana Islands region. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. (PR)

4.7-magnitude quake in Alamagan region

At 5:06am on April 12, 2021 a report of a 4.7-magnitude earthquake occurred at 17.987°N 146.958°E in the Alamagan region, Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. (PR)

MCS Theatre Club presents Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

As part of the ongoing celebration of its 25th anniversary, Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club presents its next theatrical production, an adaptation of William Shakespeare's classic comedy *As You Like It* on campus on April 30 and May 1 starting at 7pm each night.

Tickets are \$25 for front row premium seats and \$10 for general admission. Tickets can be purchased at Herman's Modern Bakery, Java Joe's Kagman Mobil, Naked Fish Bar & Grill, Puerto Rico Shell, Tribe Marianas, and the school's Business Office.

To comply with COVID-19 Mitigation Guidelines, tickets are limited and are available only on a first-come, first-served basis.

Funding for this production is provided by the CNMI CARES Relief Fund for Organizations and supported by the National Endowment for the Arts through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020.

For more information, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. (PR)

Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars this April. Webinars run from 10am to 11:30am and will be conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

■ **April 15 – Marketing to the Federal Government:** The federal government buys products and services differently than the private sector. The Guam PTAC will discuss marketing strategies, essential documents, and how to get your company in "the system."

■ **April 22 – Wages:** Different federal contracts require different wage rates. Which wage do you pay your employees on government contracts? The Guam PTAC will discuss the various laws and regulations to make sure you stay in compliance.

■ **April 29 – Government of Guam Procurement:** The Guam PTAC will explain Government of Guam Procurement, where to find opportunities, and how to submit bids.

Register on our website, <http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php>. (PR)

CHamoru commission meeting set

The *Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'ná'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tāno'* (Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) will hold its first April monthly virtual meeting on April 15, 2021, Thursday from 12:30pm to 3:30pm via Zoom. Email Rosa Salas Palomo, Kumisión board secretary for Zoom Link Information, special accommodations, and agenda at kailee.rosapalomo@gmail.com and/or Anna Marie B. Acreo, administrator at sainaguinifi@gmail.com. (PR)

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 50 1055 • SAIPAN • MP • 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-8500/1 FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
E-MAIL ADDRESS: CPA.ADMIN@PTACOM.COM WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPTS.COM

**NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID
ADVERTISING CONCESSION AT THE
TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**Project No.: CPA-IFB-003-21
CPA Concession No.: TAD-2020-01-02**

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations for Advertising Opportunities at the Tinian International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning April 13, 2021, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday to Friday, at the Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport. CPA offices are closed every Monday for austerity reasons and also on holidays. The IFB includes layouts and requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of \$100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid. Payments are accepted in the form of cash or cashier's checks made out to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Executive Director through email at cpa.admin@ptacom.com with copy to Joy Ann Tenorio at joy.tenorio@cnmipsports.com no later than May 06, 2021.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: **"INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-003-21."** One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than **2:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, May 25, 2021**, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

Bids will be opened on May 25, 2021, at 3:00p.m. at the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Departure Building, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to advertise at certain designated locations within the Tinian International Airport for a period of two (2) years and requires the concessionaire(s) to operate such concessions to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date

Name: Monissalyn I. Blas
Address: P.O. Box 501262 CK
Phone: 287-1701

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the)
Petitioner for the)
Change of Name of:) FCD CN
Maxie Milan) CIVIL ACTION
Blas Yamada) NO. 21-0045
A Minor Child)

By:) **NOTICE OF**
Monissalyn) **HEARING**
Iguel Blas)
Petitioner(s))

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on April 30, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom Superior Court, before Honorable Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2021.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

WH names Zorita point person for US territories

The interests of U.S. citizens living in the territories will receive a boost in the White House, with President Joe Biden bringing on Gretchen Sierra Zorita to serve as deputy director for Puerto Rico and the Territories in the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

NMC Nursing Program accepting applications for fall 2021 cohort

Students who are interested in pursuing a career in nursing can apply to become part of the Northern Marianas College Nursing Program's newest cohort in the fall 2021 semester. Those who meet the program's requirements can submit their application before or on Monday, May 17, 2021.

The selection of students will be based on the following criteria: cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher; completion of all nursing and general education prerequisites with a grade of "C" or higher; the ability to understand, speak and write in English; and a passing score in the program's entrance exam. More information about the program's entrance exam can be found on the nursing page of NMC's website.

The number of students selected will also depend on the number of faculty available to teach the class. At this time, the class size will be limited to 30 students. If there is not enough space for all applicants, a wait list will be established.

Students are advised to make an appointment with their nursing adviser via email as soon as possible to discuss prerequisites and transcripts in order to determine current standing and progress toward meeting eligibility requirements.

Selection of students for the fall 2021 cohort will be completed before August 2021. A notification letter will be sent to each applicant using the address designated on the application. Application forms may be downloaded from www.marianas.edu.

For more information, contact the NMC Nursing Department via email at andrew.mendiola@marianas.edu or rosalduan@marianas.edu. (NMC)

In taking up this role, Sierra Zorita is stepping down from her position on the board of directors for Equally American, which advocates for equality and representation for the 3.5 million citizens living in U.S. territories.



Zorita


"The creation of this new position in the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs represents a significant shift toward inclusion and equality for citizens of the territories," said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American. "President Biden has made an excellent choice—having someone of Gretchen's knowledge and expertise in the White House will

be a gamechanger for Puerto Rico and the territories."


Sierra Zorita is a leading thought leader on federal issues that impact Puerto Rico and other territories. She has worked to bring attention in Washington, D.C. to issues affecting Puerto Ricans on both the island and the U.S. mainland, and to draw connections between issues each of the territories face in common.

In addition to her service on the board of Equally American, Sierra Zorita has served leading roles with the National Puerto Rican Agenda, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda Puerto Rico Working Group, Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, and the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts. Prior government service includes roles at the U.S. Agency for International Development, the White House Office of Management and Budget, the U.S. Government and Accountability Office, and the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Census and Population.

"We are excited for Gretchen as she takes on this important new role coordinating territorial policy at the White House," Weare added. "She has been an indispensable contributor to the work of Equally American through her board service over the last three years. We could not be more proud of Gretchen, and look forward to working with her in her new role." (PR)



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 21 – 032

Opening Date: April 5, 2021 • Closing Date: April 16, 2021

POSITION TITLE:

DEPARTMENT:

LOCATION:

ANNUAL SALARY:

CONTRACT:

POSITION(S):

Safety Technician

Safety Office Division

Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA

\$20,826.00 - \$28,115.00 per annum, Non - Exempt

Not Contracted

One (1)

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Assists with facility and site inspections to review and monitor compliance with safety and environmental regulations and standards; prepares and issues citations for corrective actions to address compliance violations.
- Responds to incidents and emergencies and assists with ensuring compliance with laws, rules and regulations; follows up to ensure issues are resolved and procedures are followed.
- Prepares incident and accident reports to document issues and corrective actions.
- Monitors equipment and supplies inventory; requests replacement stock to replenish inventory levels; ensures stock supply and preparedness for responding to oil spills or related incidents.
- Conducts or assists with a variety of informational workshops and/or orientations.
- Reviews project specifications and monitors field project work as needed.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS and based on assignment, up to 2 years of related work experience.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Investigative techniques; Mitigation procedures; Safe work practices and procedures; Customer service principles; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Performing inspections to monitor safety and environmental compliance; Responding to emergency incidents to ensure corrective actions and proper procedures are followed; Monitoring equipment and supply inventory; Conducting and assisting with informational workshops and orientations; Reviewing project specifications and monitoring project work; Providing customer service; Preparing reports and related activity documentation; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing:

- Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.
- Hazmat and OSHA Certifications (Position may require)

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday through Friday (Except Legal Holidays), 7:30 am – 4:30 pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 21 – 036

Opening Date: March 31, 2021 • Closing Date: April 14, 2021

POSITION TITLE:

DEPARTMENT:

LOCATION:

ANNUAL SALARY:

CONTRACT:

POSITION(S):

Trades Technician-Operator

Power Generation

Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA

\$20,826.00 to \$28,115.00 per annum, Non- Exempt

Not Contracted

Four (4)

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Power Generation Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the Power Generation Division.

Duties:

- Responsible for the safe and efficient operation of all plant equipment and machinery including, but not limited to, generators, operation of valves, plant production operations, and unloading of diesel fuel tank trucks to storage tanks.
- Follows all safety and operations procedures during operations and maintenance activities.
- Responsible for monitoring all Plant systems as assigned.
- Will act as the responsible person when working without supervision. Responsible for entire plant during operating periods.
- May direct and/or instruct all other personnel as required during all other periods.
- May be on call for emergency response.
- Operates, controls, monitors and inspects generators, switchgears, motor controls, transformers, protection relays, circuit breakers, compressors, RO system and other associated equipment.
- Performs analysis, maintenance, operations, installations and/or repairs of 8 megawatt, 13 megawatt Mitsubishi-MAN diesel engines to include engine auxiliary equipment in the main Power Plant and provide the same services on the small Power Plant with 2.5 megawatt Electromotive Division (EMD) units.
- Ensures work is within Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) engineering specifications and quality levels.
- Takes readings from meters, gauges and computers at established intervals, reads and interprets data to take corrective steps as necessary.
- Inspects records and log book entries, and communicates with other plant personnel in order to assess equipment operating status.
- Performs systems operations to regulate and coordinate transmission load, frequencies and line voltages.
- Identifies potential issues and operational concerns; performs operational inspections and symptomatic maintenance; provides status reports; evaluates and implements solutions and corrective actions under emergency situations.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education. Considerable knowledge in operation, repair, and maintenance of power generating and/or industrial equipment/facilities. Must demonstrate having had (A) 4 years of increasingly responsible experience in a diesel engine power plant operations and (B) those 4 years of increasingly responsible experience are to be performing operator duties.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Mechanical and electrical principles, practices and operations of power plant equipment. Customer service principles; Mathematical concepts; Inventory maintenance practices; Taking equipment readings and maintaining reading data; Inspection procedures; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Performing inspections and analyzing system and equipment data; Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standard operating procedures; Monitoring plant equipment and making adjustments; Identifying electrical and mechanical issues and recommending or implementing solutions; Initiating requests and trouble calls and providing assistance; Preparing and updating activity logs and status reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Able to lift and carry heavy objects of 45 pounds and over, climb ladders, reach above the shoulders, stand, sit, crawl and kneel for prolonged periods and perform repeated bending. Recognize color codes, operate cranes and motor vehicles. Occasionally use solvents, de-greasing agents, or other chemical agents, and be assigned to protracted or irregular hours of work; exposed to dust, oil, grease, constant or excessive noise, vibration, and smoke and gas fumes. Work closely with others and/or alone depending on assigned daily activities.

Must be available to work a 24/7 rotation shift to include weekends, holidays and on-call.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Financial cooperation can help fight the pandemic

The International Monetary Fund's new economic forecast offers encouragement to the world's rich countries. They're on track to recover strongly from the pandemic. For many poorer countries, the opposite is true: The end is not in sight, the pandemic is still getting worse, and their economic losses are mounting. Their debts, in many cases, will prove unsustainable.

Rich countries should be doing more to help in all kinds of ways, above all with the production and distribution of vaccines. But designing a more resilient system of financial cooperation, through the IMF and other institutions, remains an essential part of the task.

Up to now, improvisation has played a bigger role than systemic innovation. With the agreement of President Joe Biden's administration, for instance, governments have decided that the IMF should issue a big new tranche of special drawing rights, or SDRs, to its members. That will give valuable financial help to many countries struggling to cope with the pandemic. But it isn't ideal.

SDRs are a reserve asset created by the IMF and allocated to its members broadly in proportion to their weight in the global economy. They can be cheaply converted into dollars or other hard currency—acting, in effect, as a low-cost line of credit that financially stressed governments can access quickly. Their original purpose was to ensure that a shortage of dollar liquidity wouldn't constrict international transactions. At the moment, that concern is beside the point: There's a glut of global dollar liquidity, not a shortage. Even so, an injection of new SDRs will bolster the finances of many poor countries.

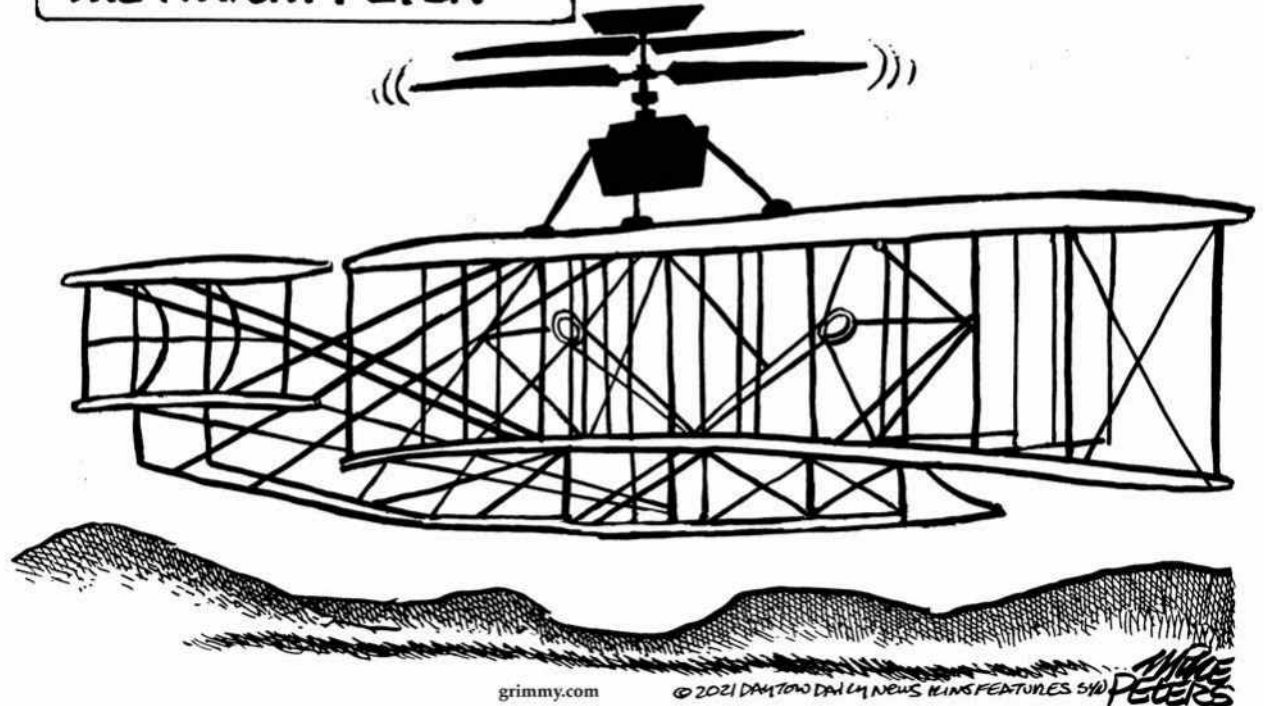
The new allocation of \$650 billion is, to be sure, a scatter-shot device. It'll boost the reserves of all IMF members. In absolute terms the poorest will get least, though as a proportion of their diminished reserves, they'll feel a bigger benefit. The maneuver is also technical and opaque. For many governments, that's a virtue, because they hope what might otherwise be a controversial plan will fly below the political radar. Relatedly, the U.S. has a veto on SDR allocations, and \$650 billion is (roughly speaking) the biggest injection that the Treasury Department can agree to without seeking approval in Congress.

In addition to promoting the SDR plan, the IMF and some of its member governments have cobbled together other relatively modest arrangements. One idea gaining support is worth adding to this list. The new SDR allocation could be improved if the rich countries agreed to donate some of their new reserves to COVAX—the United Nations-led effort to accelerate vaccine distribution in the developing world—and similar initiatives.

Yet off-the-cuff flexibility only goes so far. The IMF and its partner institutions should also create new facilities capable of delivering substantial assistance under extreme circumstances—like today's—where financial distress isn't

See FINANCIAL on Next Page

FIRST FLIGHT ON MARS,
CARRYING A PIECE OF
THE WRIGHT FLYER



Fauci and Walensky can start being candid

On March 29, Rochelle Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control, shared “the recurring feeling I have of impending doom.” Later that day, she gave MSNBC viewers some good news: “Our data from the CDC today suggests, you know, that vaccinated people do not carry the virus, don’t get sick.”

Three days later, a spokesman for the CDC took it back: “Dr. Walensky spoke broadly during this interview. It’s possible that some people who are fully vaccinated could get COVID-19. The evidence isn’t clear whether they can spread the virus to others. We are continuing to evaluate the evidence.”

The CDC’s recommendations on travel have also been confusing. In March, it delayed issuing guidelines for people who have been vaccinated, leading to complaints of political interference from the Joe Biden administration. On April 2, it updated its website to say that people who have been fully vaccinated “can travel safely within the United States” but should take precautions such as mask-wearing to protect others.

The same day, though, Walensky said that “while we believe that fully vaccinated people can travel at low risk to themselves, CDC is not recommending travel at this time due to the rising number of cases.” The CDC hasn’t said, though, that it’s recommending against travel by vaccinated people.

Walensky is not alone in providing whiplash along with COVID guidance. Anthony Fauci, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, notoriously went from discouraging mask use early in 2020 (“people keep fiddling with the mask and they keep touching their face”) to encouraging it later.

He has given conflicting accounts of why his advice changed. His most frequent explanation is that at the outset, masks needed to be conserved for the benefit of health-care providers and the ill.

A lot of public health experts have been “underselling the vaccine,” others among them have noted. They have emphasized that the protection the vaccines confer is not complete and may fade over time, and told people they will still have to wear masks and avoid large gatherings after inoculation.

All these experts deserve some slack. The stakes and the scrutiny have been higher than ever. They have had to convey information about a little-understood virus to tens of millions of people with less scientific literacy than themselves. Errors and miscommunication were inevitable.

But there is a troubling through line to many of the most damaging episodes of public-health messaging in the pandemic: a fear of candor. Authorities held back from saying what they believed to be true because they thought it would elicit undesirable behaviors from the public.

Tell people that masks are helpful, and they will scoop them

By RAMESH PONNURU

Bloomberg View

Ramesh Ponnuru is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is a senior editor at National Review and a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.



all up (or use them badly). Tell them vaccines will protect them, and the norm of masking will collapse.

These fears weren’t baseless. But lack of candor has had serious costs. Confusion is one of them: Even reasonably attentive people have been left in the dark about the full benefits of vaccination.

Another is that withholding the truth can also cause counterproductive reactions. Public-health experts and government officials want Americans to be vaccinated; letting them know that the risk of transmitting COVID-19 once you have been vaccinated is low would strengthen their motivation to get the shots.

But the biggest risk is that distrust of the public will be repaid by distrust from the public. And there is some evidence that this has happened.

Trust in the CDC fell by 16 points between the spring and fall of 2020, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation’s polling. In the Economist/YouGov’s polling, distrust of the CDC among Republicans rose from 32% last summer to 48% in March. Distrust of Fauci has jumped, too. That increase was again concentrated among Republicans, 63% of whom lack confidence in his medical advice.

Republican officials, especially former President Donald Trump, have done a lot to move those numbers. But missteps like the 180 on masks surely contributed to the trends, too, making it easier for Trump to sow doubt.

That doubt is now an obstacle to ending the COVID pandemic. Among those Americans with no plans for vaccination, majorities do not trust either Fauci or the CDC. The credibility of public health as an enterprise may well be weaker, too, when we face the next deadly contagion.

Walensky prefaced her remarks about “impending doom” by noting that when she took her job, she made a promise: “I would tell you the truth even if it was not the news we wanted to hear.” If they want people to listen, they will have to do something even harder: Tell the truth even if it is not the news they think people can handle.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

11 steps to set up a CNMI company

Starting a business is an exciting time. But it's seldom simple. You'll need to navigate a variety of issues, including how to set up your company. Today's article will discuss 11 steps that you'll need to traverse to properly form a CNMI company.

First, pick a name. But don't stop there. Do some research. Google the name to see if anyone else is already using it, both in the CNMI and elsewhere. If that search comes up clean, call the Department of Commerce to check if the name is available. If so, great. If not, pick a new name and repeat your detective work.

Second, select what kind of company you'll own. You have five choices, depending on your circumstances. Those options are a sole proprietorship, a partnership, an S corporation, a C corporation, and a limited liability company. Each version poses different tax and liability consequences.

Third, write the governance documents for your company, especially if you have any partners. These documents should spell out each person's investments and responsibilities, how profits and losses will be shared, how owners can exit the business, and so on. Generally, you'll want to get a business lawyer to help with these documents because freely available online templates are normally too simple. They tend to omit important details that the typical person won't notice until problems arise months or years down the line.

Fourth, choose a registered agent. This person will be designated to receive official correspondence on behalf of the business. For example, if the government sends the business a letter, it will go to the registered agent. And if someone sues the company, the lawsuit will also be given to the registered agent.

Fifth, file your governance documents. For instance, if you elected to set up an LLC, you'll need to submit an Articles of Organization, an Operating Agreement, and a Registered-Agent Form. To do so, print three copies of each document and then hand-deliver them to the Department of Commerce's office on Capitol Hill. Once there, someone will review the documents

and then give you an invoice. Take the invoice to the CNMI Treasury's office on Capitol Hill and pay. Thereafter, drive back to the Department of Commerce with proof of payment. From there, the processing time is seven-to-10 working days, according to the Department of Commerce.

Sixth, obtain a zoning clearance. To apply, go to the Zoning Department's office in Dandan and provide them with a zoning permit application plus your office lease and a floor plan for your office space. The Zoning Department will review the application and then give you an invoice. Take the invoice to the CNMI Treasury's Office, which is located in the same building. Pay the invoice and then return to the Zoning Department with proof of payment. From there, the processing time is 21 working days, according to the Zoning Department.

Seventh, get a business license. To obtain one, go to the Business License office in Dandan and submit a business-license application. As part of the application, also provide a copy of your office floor plan, Commerce-stamped governance documents, and Certificate of Incorporation. The Business License office will then give you an invoice. Go across the hall to the CNMI Treasury's office and pay the invoice. Then return to Business-License office and provide them with proof of payment. From there, the processing time is 10 working days, according to the Business License office.

Eighth, file your initial company report. This document is a one-page form that can be found online at the Department of Commerce's website. Fill out the form and then make a copy. Take them both to the Department of Commerce on Capitol Hill. The staff will then give you an invoice. Take the invoice to the CNMI Treasury's office on Capitol Hill and pay. Then drive back to the Department of Commerce. Once you hand them proof of payment, they will provide you with a stamped copy of your initial company report.

Ninth, create a Tax Identification Number. To do so, go to the IRS' website and fill out the form. The process is quick and free.

FINE PRINT**By JORDAN SUNDELL**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jordan Sundell is a lawyer. His practice primarily focuses on business, real estate, estate planning, and asset protection. You can find his columns here every other Tuesday as well as on The Fine Print on Facebook. You can contact Mr. Sundell via this newspaper at editor@saipantribune.com or 235-6397/235-2440.

But note: If you are a sole proprietorship or a single-member LLC, then you don't need to create a tax identification number for your business; in that case, you can use your social security number for taxes and banking.

Tenth, if the company has any employees (except for yourself), then obtain workman's compensation insurance. To get it, call your preferred insurance provider.

Finally, set up a bank account. To do so, pick a bank and set up an appointment. Bring identification, your governance documents, the Certificate of Organization, and any other documents that the bank requests.

If that seems like more work than you want to go through, many lawyers and agents will handle the process for you for a fee. And some of them also offer to expedite the process for an extra fee.

But hopefully the process gets automated soon. In many states, forming a company takes minutes, not weeks, to become official.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

The border can't be our only concern. The US needs an immigrant integration policy

The thousands of migrants trying to enter the United States at the southern border have sparked a fresh wave of political debate over who should be let into the country and how minors and others seeking asylum should be treated.

Republicans have launched a political blitz against Democrats by painting President Joe Biden as the cause of a so-called surge at the southern border. Meanwhile, Democrats in Congress have settled on passing legislation in the House that would provide a path to citizenship for millions of migrants, including "Dreamers" and farmworkers. Neither side is talking about how newcomers should be integrated into American life.

FINANCIAL

From Page 8

the result of irresponsible economic policies. The fund's standard operating procedure is to make loans conditional on programs of economic reform. Negotiating those schemes is often a protracted and politically fraught process. The economic-policy response to a pandemic needs to be broader, faster and less concerned with prescribing new fiscal strategies.

Arrangements for sovereign debt relief also need work. They have for years, in fact, but the pandemic underlines the point. COVID-19 rightly led the G-20 governments to devise the Debt Service Suspension Initiative—but this is temporary and partial. Efforts are underway to build on this scheme, but for now the world still lacks a system that's comprehensive, fair to creditors, transparent and capable of delivering sufficient relief when necessary. It's a complex job, but it should be a priority.

Starting with their discussions this week, the world's finance ministers should look into more deliberate changes to their arrangements for international financial cooperation. With a couple of bolder innovations, they could handle the consequences of COVID-19 a lot more effectively—and they'd do well to remember that this pandemic is unlikely to be the last.

For a nation obsessed with the politics of immigration and the effects immigrants have on society, the U.S. puts very little effort into integration policy. We at least manage to rank in the second tier of countries favorable to immigrants on the Migrant Integration Policy Index, but any help we offer newcomers is patchwork at best; it varies from hostility in some locales to decent programs in others. Many immigrants thrive in America, but their success is, as one 2011 study concluded, "heavily stratified" by "educational and economic resources, racial inequities and legal status."

Biden's immigration reform proposal, the U.S. Citizenship Act, could begin to remedy our laissez-faire approach to inclusion. If it were adopted, it would represent a significant scale of investment in developing a national integration policy.

One key provision of Biden's overhaul would create a national foundation to help coordinate integration efforts with state and local officials and promote citizenship preparation programs among low-income and underserved populations. That alone would improve the scattershot quality of American integration efforts that scholars see as a major problem.

The act would establish a grant pilot program to jump-start integration efforts at the local level and allocate close to \$300 million to English training, workforce preparation and naturalization programs—likely the biggest investment of its kind since the Immigration Reform and Control Act passed in 1986. It also would commission a study on employment opportunities for immigrants with professional credentials earned abroad. As it stands now, many newcomers never find a way to put their skills and education to use in the U.S.

Accelerating the process of immigrant integration is as good for American society as it is for new arrivals. My own research on refugees shows just how far some of the provisions included in the Biden plan can go.

With a co-researcher, I looked at recent refugees from five nations who arrived in the U.S. with varying skill sets and resources. Our analysis showed that refugees who attended basic English language classes were much more likely to be attending school, and those who took job training courses were more likely

By FRANCISCO LARA-GARCÍA

Los Angeles Times



Francisco Lara-Garcia is a Paul F. Lazarsfeld fellow in the sociology department at Columbia University.






to have a job. These simple programs were more important for predicting school attendance and employment than other factors, including country of origin, education levels before immigration and prior occupation. In short, the language and workforce funding in the Biden plan could make a real difference in outcomes for immigrants.

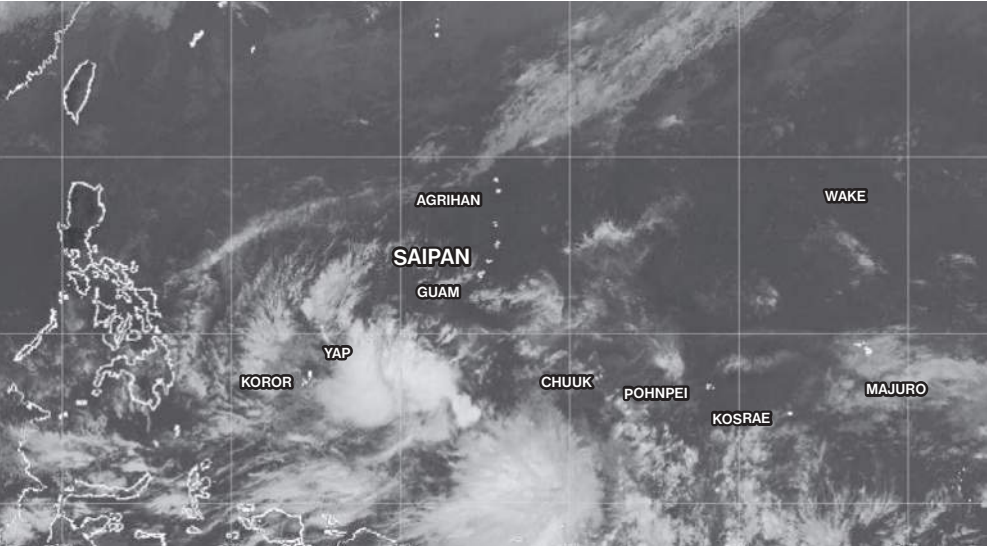
Unfortunately, there are already warning signs that inclusion and integration programs could be abandoned as Congress wades into the politics of immigration reform. The current Republican plan, just like bipartisan immigration proposals in 2007 and 2013, does not contain meaningful integration programs. And in an environment where Republicans are attempting to position Democrats as prioritizing the needs of migrants before those of American citizens, some GOP lawmakers will surely object to any program that serves immigrants.

Nor did Democrats keep integration policy in the first round of immigration legislation they pushed through the House. This may be politically expedient, and there is a chance that it can be fixed later. But more likely, the piecemeal approach Democrats are taking will cause integration and inclusion programs to fall through the cracks.

As the immigration reform debate picks up steam, it's crucial that policymakers remember that their task is not just to determine whether and how to let people through the door. A sensible immigration system must also address how we want immigrants to interact with American society once they are here.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 5 to 15 mph.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.	
86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 9:14 AM, MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly cloudy skies and isolated showers moving through the Marianas and surrounding waters. A tropical disturbance to the south is expected to have only minimal impact on the Marianas. The buoys reveal combined seas of 4 to 6 feet, composed mainly of a north swell and an east swell, with some east wind waves on top.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK

For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Sunny	87 79 °F	
Palau	Rain	85 77 °F	
Yap	Overcast	84 72 °F	
Chuuk	Rain	84 80 °F	
Pohnpei	Overcast	82 79 °F	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	84 80 °F	
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	84 80 °F	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:04 AM	6:31 PM
Wednesday	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Thursday	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Friday	6:02 AM	6:31 PM
Saturday	6:01 AM	6:31 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:44 AM	7:27 PM	-
Wednesday	7:20 AM	8:15 PM	-
Thursday	7:59 AM	9:04 PM	-
Friday	8:40 AM	9:55 PM	-
Saturday	9:25 AM	10:47 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	72 66 °F	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	71 43 °F	
Hong Kong	Scattered Clouds	84 76 °F	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83 69 °F	
London	Mostly Cloudy	58 40 °F	
Los Angeles	Sunny	72 52 °F	
Manila	Sunny	96 79 °F	
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	59 55 °F	
Miami	Clear	79 71 °F	
New York	Clear	74 55 °F	
Osaka	Overcast	62 55 °F	
Paris	Fog	61 41 °F	
Pusan	Sunny	64 44 °F	
Rome	Sunny	69 47 °F	
Salem	Light Rain	58 42 °F	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	60 49 °F	
Seoul	Sunny	71 47 °F	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	59 45 °F	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	80 58 °F	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:32 AM	Low Tide	0.69	
8:07 AM	High Tide	1.81	
2:52 PM	Low Tide	0.26	
9:08 PM	High Tide	1.78	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 29, 2021

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	6:30am	7:10am	1, 4, 5, 6	UA174	4:50am	5:31am	1, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	6:30am	8:50pm	5 via Guam	UA184/174	9:50pm	5:31am+1	5 via Guam
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	7:05pm	8:50pm	5	UA184	9:50pm	3:45am+1	5
UA183	7:15pm	9:10pm	1, 3,	UA184	10:25pm	4:10am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat	1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun	1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri	1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat	1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun	1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
GUAM TO ROTA				2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
				2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
				2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
				2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business



MARK RABAGO
One Piece, Naruto, One Punch Man, and Gundam, and Funko Pops are just some of the new toys at Unique Shop.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Children and those who are still kids at heart now have a favorite store to go to on Saipan—Unique Shop in Susupe has restocked itself with toys and other knickknacks from floor to ceiling.

Just some of the items in the store include battery-powered vehicles for tots like Power Wheels, figurines from the Japanese manga series One

Piece, Naruto, One Punch Man, and Gundam, Funko Pops, wooden and metal puzzles, and home kitchen sets, supermarket sets, trampolines, among others.

Unique Shop manager Jay Li said he shipped these unique and hard-to-find toys to the island out of necessity when he himself had trouble acquiring them on Saipan.

“When I tried to buy gifts for my family and friends, I always had a hard time finding them on island. A lot of my

friends have no recourse but to order online. That’s why I decided to carry them here at our store,” he said.

Aside from toys, Unique Toys is open to do special orders when requested by customers.

So, will high-end Japanese super robot toys and masterpiece Transformers grace Unique Toys soon? Li said that all depends if he finds a good supplier and if the price is affordable and not out of reach of his loyal customers.

“I decided to sell relatively high-end toys...because personally I’m also a collector. I also believe there are a lot of people like me here on Saipan who likes these types of toy items,” he said.

Unique Toys, much like other businesses on Saipan, hasn’t escaped the negative

Unique Shop stocks up on anime toys



MARK RABAGO

Unique Toys is located next to West Coast Restaurant along Beach Road in Susupe. It’s open every day from 10am to 9pm.



MARK RABAGO

Unique Shop offers discounts on selected items and free gift-wrapping.

Fed's Powell sees US boom ahead, with COVID still a risk

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. economy is poised for an extended period of strong growth and hiring, the chair of the Federal Reserve said in an interview broadcast Sunday, though the coronavirus still poses some risk.

Chair Jerome Powell, speaking to CBS’ “60 Minutes,” also said that he doesn’t expect to raise the Fed’s benchmark interest rate, currently pegged at nearly zero, this year. And he downplayed the risk of higher inflation stemming from sharp increases in government spending and expanding budget deficits.

“We feel like we’re at a place where the economy’s about to start growing much more quickly and job creation coming in much more quickly,” Powell said. “This growth that we’re expecting in the second half of this year is going to be very strong. And job creation, I would expect to be very strong.”

In the wide-ranging interview, Powell said that the Fed is closely studying the development of a digital dollar, but hasn’t yet made a decision on whether to

proceed. Powell said last month that the central bank wouldn’t issue a digital currency without approval from Congress.

Powell noted that roughly a million jobs were added in March, when revisions to jobs data in January and February are included. The unemployment rate fell to 6% from 6.2%.

“We would like to see a string of months like that,” he said. “That is certainly in the range of possibility.”

Still, there are about 8.4 million fewer jobs than before the pandemic, and Powell acknowledged that he regularly sees a homeless encampment near the Fed’s headquarters in Washington.

“There’s a lot of suffering out there still,” he said. “And I think it’s important that, just as a country, we stay and help those people. The economy that we’re going back to is going to be different from the one that we had.”

Powell also said the primary risk to the economy remains the pandemic and a breakdown in precautions that Americans have largely taken for the past year.

Pubs, hairdressers set to reopen as UK eases virus lockdown

LONDON (AP)—Millions of people in Britain will get their first chance in months for haircuts, casual shopping and restaurant meals on Monday, as the government takes the next step on its lockdown-lifting road map.

Nationwide restrictions have been in place in England since early January, and similar rules in the other parts of the U.K., to suppress a surge in coronavirus infections that swept the country late last year, linked to a more transmissible new variant first identified in southeast England.

Britain has had Europe’s worst coronavirus outbreak, with more than 127,000 confirmed deaths.

Infections, hospitalizations and deaths have all fallen thanks to the lockdown, and a mass vaccination program that has given at least one dose to more than 60% of the adult population.

But Prime Minister Boris Johnson and epidemiologists



AP

Harriet Henry, manager of The Tea Room in Knutsford, England, poses with the Open sign outside her cafe, as she prepares to open, Sunday April 11, 2021.

have urged caution, saying that many people remain unvaccinated and relaxing social distancing rules or allowing foreign holidays this summer could bring a new spike in infections.

“The situation in the U.K. is becoming clear and is stabilizing, but people have to remember that’s not the case elsewhere,” said Peter Horby, who chairs the government’s New and Emerging Respiratory Threats Advisory Group. “The

pandemic is still raging globally.

“And many countries in Europe even are still seeing racing case numbers or having to reintroduce lockdowns. So it’s very hard to predict what will happen in the next couple of months,” he told Times Radio.

On Monday, nonessential shops will be allowed to reopen, along with hair salons, gyms and outdoor service at pubs and restaurants.

The prime minister had

free gift-wrapping.

Unique Toys is located next to West Coast Restaurant along Beach Road in Susupe. It’s open every day from 10am to 9pm. For more information, call 234-5020. You can also reach them through their Facebook page: Unique Saipan.

“If you are looking for gifts or toys for your loved ones, we accept customized and special order. Please call us or message us anytime,” said Li.

promised to visit a pub for a pint to mark the occasion, but postponed the celebratory drink after the death of Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II, on Friday.

Indoor drinking and dining won’t be allowed until May 17 at the earliest, and theaters, cinemas, nightclubs and most other venues remain closed, while indoor socializing is tightly restricted and foreign holidays remain banned.

The easing is good news for retail and hospitality businesses, which have endured several stretches of lockdown over the past year. But it’s a long way from business as usual; the British Beer and Pub Association estimates that just 40% of pubs in England have the space to reopen for outdoor service.

The rules apply in England. The other parts of the United Kingdom—Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland—are following their own, broadly similar plans.

Nation

Prosecution case nears end in ex-cop's trial in Floyd death

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The trial of a former Minneapolis police officer charged in George Floyd's death enters its third week Monday, with

the state nearing the end of a case built on searing witness accounts, official rejections of the neck restraint and expert testimony attributing Floyd's

death to a lack of oxygen.

Derek Chauvin, 45, who is white, is charged with murder and manslaughter in Floyd's May 25 death. Police were

called to a neighborhood market where Floyd, who was Black, was accused of trying to pass a counterfeit bill. By-stander video of Floyd, pinned

by Chauvin and two other officers as he cried "I can't breathe" and eventually grew still, sparked protests and scattered violence around the U.S.

partment officials, including Chief Medaria Arradondo, testifying that Chauvin's restraint of Floyd violated department policy.

Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson argues that Floyd's death was caused by drug use and underlying health conditions including a bad heart. He's expected to call his own medical experts

after the prosecution wraps its case, expected early this week. Nelson hasn't said whether Chauvin will testify.

The second week of the trial was dominated by technical testimony, beginning with senior Minneapolis Police De-



Chauvin

Prosecutors say Floyd was pinned for 9 minutes, 29 seconds. Police officials testified that while officers might sometimes use a knee across a person's back or shoulder to gain or

maintain control, they're also taught the specific dangers for a person in Floyd's position—prone on his stomach, with his hands cuffed behind him—and how such a person must be turned into a side recovery position as soon as possible.

Vigil honoring S. Carolina shooting victims draws hundreds



AP

People participate in a memorial service and prayer vigil for the Lesslie family at Fountain Park, Sunday, April 11, 2021, in Rock Hill, S.C.

ROCK HILL, S.C. (AP)—Hundreds gathered Sunday at the vigil for the prominent South Carolina physician, his wife and two of their grandchildren—all dead at the hands of former NFL player Phillip Adams, authorities said—to reflect on the lasting impression they made on their communities.

People settled on camp chairs and picnic blankets for the service at a park in downtown Rock Hill, dressed in a gamut of bright shades, from vivid green and orange to robin blue. Mourners cried and laughed in equal parts at shared memories of Robert and Barbara Lesslie, and two of their grandchildren, 9-year-old Adah Lesslie and 5-year-old Noah Lesslie.

"The past few days have been certainly filled with much suffering and grief but also peppered with the most amazing treasures sent directly from God," said Amy Kulbok, one of Robert and Barbara Lesslie's children, before reading the lyrics to a song written by Adah herself. "Even in the deepest fog, we will find one another and love each other. When people see us, they will see Jesus Christ in you and me."

According to police, Adams went to the home of Robert and Barbara Lesslie on Wednesday and shot and killed them, two of their grandchildren, Adah Lesslie and Noah Lesslie, and James Lewis, a 38-year-old air conditioning technician from

Gaston who was doing work there. He also shot Lewis' colleague, 38-year-old Robert Shook, of Cherryville, North Carolina, who died at a Charlotte hospital Saturday evening.

The former NFL journeyman then killed himself with a gunshot to the head early Thursday after officers surrounded his parents' home, York County officials said.

A person briefed on the investigation who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak publicly said Robert Lesslie had treated Adams, who lived with his parents not far from the Lesslies' home.

In a statement to McClatchy

Newspapers Friday, Adams' parents and siblings sent their condolences to the Lesslie, Lewis and Shook families, saying, "The Phillip we know is not a man that is capable of the atrocities he committed on Wednesday."

On Sunday, the aftermath of the shooting strung together many in Rock Hill, as bubbles drifted through the air and mourners still fresh in their grief linked arms in song in honor of the Lesslies' lives.

They remembered Robert Lesslie, 70, as a Renaissance man who not only practiced medicine and attended to many in the community but authored books and took up horticulture as a hobby.

Minnesota police shoot, kill man after traffic stop incident

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (AP)—The family of a 20-year-old Minnesota man told a crowd that he was shot by police Sunday before getting back into his car and driving away, then crashing the vehicle several blocks away. The family of Daunte Wright said he was later pronounced dead.

Officials from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension said the agency was on the scene of a shooting involving a police officer in Brooklyn Center on Sunday afternoon. Meanwhile, the

Wrights demanded answers from police.

The incident happened with Minneapolis already on edge and midway through the trial of the first of four police officers in George Floyd's death. Brooklyn Center is a city with a population of about 30,000 people located on the northwest border of Minneapolis.

According to a statement from Brooklyn Center Police, officers stopped an individual shortly before 2 p.m. Sunday after determining the driver had an outstanding warrant.

Police said when they tried to arrest the driver, the driver re-entered the vehicle and drove away. An officer fired at the vehicle, striking the driver. Police said the vehicle traveled several blocks before striking another vehicle.

Police did not identify the driver who was shot but said the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office will release the person's name following a preliminary autopsy and family notification. A female passenger sustained non-life threatening injuries during

the crash.

A police officer was also transported to the hospital after sustaining injuries, according to EMS audio, the Star-Tribune reported. By Sunday evening, about 100 people had gathered near the scene, according to the newspaper.

"The officer shooting in Brooklyn Center today is tragic. We are asking the protesters to continue to be peaceful and that peaceful protesters are not dealt with force," Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott said on Twitter.

ACROSS THE NATION

Trump goes after Pence, McConnell in speech to party donors

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—It was supposed to be a unifying weekend for a Republican Party at war with itself over former President Donald Trump's divisive leadership. But Trump himself shattered two days of relative peace in his closing remarks to the GOP's top donors when he insulted the party's Senate leader and his wife. Ahead of the invitation-only speech at Trump's new home inside his Mar-a-Lago resort, the former president's advisers said he would emphasize his commitment to his party and Republican unity. Trump veered sharply from prepared remarks Saturday night and instead slammed Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., as a "stone-cold loser" and mocked McConnell's wife, Elaine Chao, who was Trump's transportation secretary. Trump also said he was "disappointed" in his vice president, Mike Pence, and used a profanity in assessing McConnell, according to multiple people in attendance who were not authorized to publicly discuss what was said in a private session.

Officer accused of force in stop of Black Army officer fired

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—One of two police officers accused of pepper-spraying and pointing their guns at a Black Army officer during a traffic stop has since been fired, a Virginia town announced late Sunday, hours after the governor called for an independent investigation into the case. The town of Windsor said in a statement that it joined calls

from election officials, including Gov. Ralph Northam, in requesting an investigation by Virginia State Police into the December 2020 encounter in which two Windsor officers were accused of drawing their guns, pointing them at U.S. Army second lieutenant Caron Nazario and using a slang term to suggest he was facing execution. Nazario, who is Black and Latino, was also pepper-sprayed and knocked to the ground by the officers, Joe Gutierrez and Daniel Crocker, according to the lawsuit he filed earlier this month against them.

Reports: Man kills self after standoff at Honolulu hotel

HONOLULU (AP)—A standoff between Honolulu police and an armed man who fired shots through the door of his room at a luxury resort ended when the man was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, local media reported Sunday. A SWAT team entered the fourth-floor room at The Kahala Hotel & Resort about 3:30 a.m. Sunday and found the man dead, local television stations and a newspaper reported, citing unnamed police officials. All reported police didn't release further information, including the man's name. Messages sent to spokespersons for the Honolulu Police Department and the Honolulu mayor's office seeking confirmation and further details were not immediately returned Sunday to The Associated Press. Shots were fired at around 6 p.m., according to police. Hotel security staff went up to the room where the man was located and knocked on the door. He then fired through the door multiple times, police said.

Asia

Top official admits Chinese vaccines have 'low efficacy'

BEIJING (AP)—In a rare admission of the weakness of Chinese coronavirus vaccines, the country's top disease control official says their effectiveness is low and the government is considering mixing them to get a boost.

Chinese vaccines "don't have very high protection rates," said the director of the China Centers for Disease Control, Gao Fu, at a conference Saturday in the southwestern city of Chengdu.

Beijing has distributed hundreds of millions of doses abroad while trying to promote doubt about the effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine made using the previously experimental messenger RNA, or mRNA, process.

"It's now under formal consideration whether we should use different vaccines from different technical lines for the immunization process," Gao said.

Officials at a news conference Sunday didn't respond directly to questions about Gao's comment or possible changes in official plans. But another CDC official said developers are working on mRNA-based vaccines.

Gao did not respond to a phone call requesting further comment.

"The mRNA vaccines developed in our country have also entered the clinical trial stage," said the official, Wang Huaqing. He gave no timeline for possible use.

Experts say mixing vaccines, or sequential immunization, might boost effectiveness. Researchers in Britain are studying a possible combination of Pfizer-BioNTech and the traditional AstraZeneca vaccine.

The coronavirus pandemic, which began in central China in late 2019, marks the first time the Chinese drug industry has played a role in responding to a global health emergency.

Vaccines made by Sinovac, a private company, and Sinopharm, a state-owned firm, have made up the majority of Chinese vaccines distributed to several dozen countries including Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, Hungary, Brazil and Turkey.

The effectiveness of a Sinovac vaccine at preventing symptomatic infections was found to be as low as 50.4% by researchers in Brazil, near the 50% threshold at which health experts say a vaccine is useful. By comparison, the Pfizer-Bi-

oNTech vaccine has been found to be 97% effective.

Health experts say Chinese vaccines are unlikely to be sold to the United States, western Europe and Japan due to the complexity of the approval process.

A Sinovac spokesman, Liu Peicheng, acknowledged varying levels of effectiveness have been found but said that can be due to the age of people in a study, the strain of virus and other factors.

Beijing has yet to approve any foreign vaccines for use in China.

Gao gave no details of possible changes in strategy but cited mRNA as a possibility.

"Everyone should consider the benefits mRNA vaccines can bring for humanity," Gao said. "We must follow it carefully and not ignore it just because we already have several types of vaccines already."

Gao previously questioned the safety of mRNA vaccines. He was quoted by the official Xinhua News Agency as saying in December he couldn't rule out negative side effects because they were being used for the first time on healthy people.



Gao Fu

ASIAN BRIEFS

Thailand hits new daily record with nearly 1,000 virus cases

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's Health Ministry warned Sunday that restrictions may need to be tightened to slow the spread of a fresh coronavirus wave, as the country hit a daily record for new cases. The ministry confirmed 967 new infections, the highest ever in a 24-hour period, bringing Thailand's total to 32,625 cases since January last year—including 97 deaths. The expanding outbreak comes after the country kept the virus largely in check for most of last year. If the number of cases is still rising in two weeks, measures beyond the current restrictions on nightlife and longstanding social distancing rules will need to be put in place, said Dr. Sophon Iamsirithaworn, deputy director general of the Department of Disease Control. Most of the recent cases have been traced to an outbreak that originated last month at several nightlife entertainment venues in Bangkok, Sophon said. He said people should be working from home and exercise

vigilance. Tests among those infected at the Bangkok nightspots found some patients infected with the U.K. variant of the coronavirus, which has been found to be more infectious than the original strain.

5 rebels, ex-policeman killed in Indian-controlled Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Government forces killed five suspected rebels in two gunfights in Indian-controlled Kashmir, including a teenager, police said Sunday. A former police officer was also killed by unknown gunmen in a separate attack in the disputed Himalayan region. Fighting began late Saturday when troops, acting on intelligence, cordoned off two villages in the southern Shopian and Bijbehara areas, Inspector General Vijay Kumar told reporters. He said two soldiers were wounded in Shopian. The former police officer who was shot in the western Magam area had served in a police counterinsurgency unit but resigned about a year ago, a local police officer said, speaking on condition of anonymity

in line with regulations. He blamed the attack on anti-India militants, and said the targeted individual's brother still serves as a policeman.

8 dead, dozens hurt as Indonesia quake shakes East Java

MALANG, Indonesia (AP)—A strong earthquake on Indonesia's main island of Java killed eight people, including a woman whose motorcycle was hit by falling rocks, and damaged more than 1,300 buildings, officials said Sunday. It didn't trigger a tsunami. The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.0 quake struck off the island's southern coast at 2 p.m. Saturday. It was centered 45 kilometers (28 miles) south of Sumberpucung town of Malang District in East Java province, at a depth of 82 kilometers (51 miles). Rahmat Triyono, the head of Indonesia's earthquake and tsunami center, said the undersea tremor did not have the potential to cause a tsunami. Still, he urged people to stay away from slopes of soil or rocks that have the potential for landslides.

World

Iran calls Natanz atomic site blackout 'nuclear terrorism'

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Iran on Sunday described a blackout at its underground Natanz atomic facility an act of "nuclear terrorism," raising regional tensions as world powers and Tehran continue to negotiate over its tattered nuclear deal.

While there was no immediate claim of responsibility, suspicion fell immediately on Israel, where its media nearly uniformly reported a devastating cyberattack orchestrated by the country caused the blackout.

If Israel was responsible, it further heightens tensions between the two nations, already engaged in a shadow conflict across the wider Middle East. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who met Sunday with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, has vowed to do everything in his power to stop the nuclear deal.

Details remained few about what happened early Sunday morning at the facility, which initially was de-



This file photo released Nov. 5, 2019, by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, shows centrifuge machines in the Natanz uranium enrichment facility in central Iran.

scribed as a blackout caused by the electrical grid feeding its above-ground workshops and underground enrichment halls.

Ali Akbar Salehi, the American-educated head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, who once served as the country's foreign minister, offered what appeared to be the harshest comments of his long career, which included the assassination of nuclear scientists a decade ago. Iran blames Israel for those killings as well.

He pledged to "seriously improve" his nation's nuclear technology while working to lift international sanctions.

Salehi's comments to state TV did not explain what happened at the facility, but his words suggested a serious disruption.

"While condemning this desperate move, the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the need for a confrontation by the international bodies and the (International Atomic Energy Agency) against this nuclear terrorism," Salehi said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Brazil's virus outlook darkens amid vaccine supply snags

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—April is shaping up to be Brazil's darkest month yet in the pandemic, with hospitals struggling with a crush of patients, deaths on track for record highs and few signs of a reprieve from a troubled vaccination program in Latin America's largest nation. The Health Ministry has cut its outlook for vaccine supplies in April three times already, to half their initial level, and the country's two biggest laboratories are facing supply constraints. The delays also mean tens of thousands more deaths as the particularly contagious P.1 variant of COVID-19 sweeps Brazil. It has recorded about 350,000 of the 2.9 million virus deaths worldwide, behind only the U.S. toll of over 560,000. Brazil's seven-day rolling average has increased to 2,820 deaths per day, compared with the global average of 10,608 per day, according to data through April 8 from Johns Hopkins University. The death toll is forecast to continue rising in the next two weeks to an average of nearly 3,500 per day before receding, according to the University of Washington's

Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation.

Jordanian prince makes first public appearance since arrest

AMMAN, Jordan (AP)—Jordan's Prince Hamzah on Sunday made his first public appearance since he was placed under house arrest last week, reciting Quranic verses together with King Abdullah II at the graves of their forefathers. The gesture appeared to be an attempted show of unity on a major Jordanian holiday. Abdullah has attempted to signal in recent days that the situation is under control. But Sunday's staged event left it unclear whether the king and his popular half brother have truly put aside their differences. The conflict had escalated into the most serious public rift in the ruling family in decades, although Hamzah has denied any wrongdoing. Hamzah joined members of the Jordanian royal family marking the centenary of the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan, a British protectorate that preceded the kingdom. The royal palace released a photo and video with Abdullah and Hamzah joining other dignitaries at the

grave of their father, the late King Hussein, and the late King Talal, their grandfather.

More flee volcano on Caribbean island of St. Vincent

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (AP)—More people fled their homes on the eastern Caribbean island of St. Vincent on Sunday as La Soufrière volcano rumbled loudly for a third day and the heavy weight of its ashfall damaged some buildings. Residents reported widespread power failures early in the day, though authorities restored electricity to most of the island by late afternoon. The eruption Friday of La Soufrière prompted many people to evacuate their homes, and others who had remained in place sought shelter elsewhere Sunday. The volcano's rumbles were heard in the capital of Kingstown, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south. "I'm just here wondering when it's going to calm down," resident Kalique Sutherland said. The eruption could continue for some time, said Richard Robertson, the lead scientist at the University of the West Indies Seismic Research Center.

Overdrive

Ford dealer: Cars are the new version of toilet paper panic

By PHOEBE WALL HOWARD
DETROIT FREE PRESS

DETROIT—Despite only a slight increase in overall sales so far this year, it's a new day in paradise, some Ford Motor Co. dealers said Thursday.

Business for them has seen a dramatic turnaround from the first three months a year ago, when the coronavirus pandemic shut down cities and dealerships across America.

Now, with safety protocols in place and used car prices up, new car sales spiked in the first quarter of 2021.

"Both our stores set records," said Chad Wilson, general manager of Wilson Ford in Saginaw and Midland Ford. "We've had the Midland store since 1991 and the Saginaw store since 2018. I don't know that we've ever seen numbers like this."

What's selling? "Everything," he said.

"The only explanation that I can even muster is that cars are 2021's version of toilet paper in 2020," Wilson said. "We are taking a lot of retail orders because we don't have anything (in stock). Normally between our two stores, we'd have 150-180 F-series in stock. I think right now there might be 10. I do think there's an element of fear of missing out."

Ongoing production shutdowns related to parts shortages

and COVID-19 have led to smaller supplies of vehicles globally.

Ford reported a 1% in-

crease in total sales in the United States from a year ago to 521,334, according to sales data released Thursday.

The automaker saw a 5.1% increase in truck sales to 277,233 and a 14.3% increase in SUV sales to 216,899.

Automakers could make 1.3 million fewer vehicles because of semiconductor shortage

By TODD SPANGLER
DETROIT FREE PRESS

A trade group that represents automakers said a semiconductor shortage caused by COVID-19 could result in 1.28 million fewer vehicles being made in the U.S. this year.

In comments sent Monday to the Commerce Department, the Alliance for Auto Innovation said a recent survey done of automakers and suppliers indicated the shortage could hurt auto production for another six months.

"The chip shortage has forced a number of automakers to halt production and cancel shifts in the United States, with serious consequences for their workers and the communities in which they operate," wrote John Bozzella, the group's president and CEO.

The Auto Alliance represents most major automakers doing business in the U.S., including General Motors, Ford and Stellantis. President Joe Biden in February directed the Commerce Department to review risks in the supply chain, including the pressures put on industry by a global semiconductor shortage.

Bozzella's letter was in response to that review. Because of last year's closing of auto manufacturing facilities due to COVID, semiconductor suppliers, most of which are based overseas, moved production into other types of semiconductors needed for personal computers and others goods. Semiconductors are integral to multiple systems on vehicles.

"We have been conducting anonymized surveys of our member companies since the

onset of the chip shortage," Bozzella wrote. "The most recent survey was conducted within the last couple of weeks and, unfortunately, the high end projections indicate an even more significant impact to United States auto production than was projected in previous surveys."

As part of his letter, Bozzella also urged that some portion of funding be used to boost the domestic production of semiconductors dedicated to making those used in automobiles.

"This could be accomplished by, for example, specifying that a particular percentage—that is reasonably based on the projected needs of the auto industry—be allocated for facilities that will support the production of auto grade chips in some manner," he said.



A Ford logo on a 2017 Ford Focus. Ford dealers say new car sales spiked in the first quarter of 2021. FORD/TNS

Pandemic car care

Q: During the past year, we have driven only once a week to our grocery store, five miles away. One person thinks it would be good for the 2011 Ford Escape to go onto the freeway occasionally, up to speed for a few miles. The other person thinks this is unnecessary because on these cold nights he puts the battery charger on the night before. What do you think?

A: Although driving the vehicle occasionally is not necessary, I still do it just to get a change of scenery on a sunny day. I consider three car lengths adequate for social distancing and I am helping the economy by spending money ... on gas.

Q: Ford Recall 19S54/NHTSA 19V-904 was opened for my 2008 Ford Fusion's ABS hydraulic brake (HCU valve) problem. I originally received a letter in January 2020 stating that parts should be available late in the first quarter of 2020, another in October 2020 stating parts should be available late in the first quarter of 2021. On December 30, 2020, my wife tried to brake at a stop light during normal traffic but wet conditions. The brake pedal went down to the floor, but did not immediately stop the car, causing the car to swerve. My mechanic also experienced this same problem but could not repair it without the proper part from Ford. I opened a trouble case with Ford Motor Company and a complaint number with the NHTSA. I also took the car to a local Ford dealership for diagnosis. The dealership said they could diagnose the for \$150 but could not fix it until parts are available. In the recall letter, Ford states that: "If the HCU valve is stuck open, this may result in extended brake pedal travel required to stop the vehicle, increasing the risk of a crash. Ford has not issued instructions to stop driving the vehicle under the safety recall." The car is currently being garage kept. Your thoughts and/or suggestions?

A: Don't drive in inclement weather. I apologize for the glib answer, but the advice is good. We have grown to rely on the ABS system to improve safe braking in poor road conditions. As you know, the system "pumps" the brakes giving the driver better control to steer out of danger. Whenever the roads are clear, the ABS system just waits in the background and the regular brakes usually work normally. There is not much I can add to your endeavors to get the car fixed.

Q: We are very satisfied owners of a 2021 Subaru Ascent

with 3,300 miles on it. It has the 2.4-liter turbo boxer engine. We plan to use it to tow a single axle, 3,300-pound travel trailer. We have just learned from a friend who owned a 2019 Ascent with the same engine that he had to trade his due to his dealer being unable to solve an oil dilution issue—apparently occurring infrequently in not only some Subaru turbo vehicles. Any thoughts you could share with us on the overall safety of our vehicle? Any "symptoms" we should be watching for?

A: The oil gets diluted with gasoline which reduces its lubricating ability. The quickest way to diagnose the problem is to pull the dipstick. If the level is above the full line, or has a gasoline odor, there is a problem. Simply check the oil at every fill-up.

Q: I have a question about my 2019 Pilot Elite. I read in some Honda Pilot blogs about the long term benefits of disabling your VCM (variable cylinder management system). We bought our Pilot new and always thoroughly maintain our vehicles at the Honda dealership and look to keep this Pilot for as long as we can. But I read that the VCM causes premature wear on some cylinders and other engine parts. Do you think it is advisable to disconnect the VCM? Does doing this void your warranty?

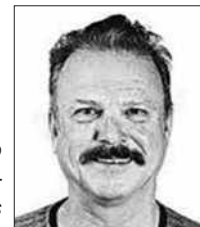
A: I would leave the variable cylinder management (VCM) system alone. Disabling some of the cylinders has been available for years on Chrysler and GM (and Honda) products with no pattern failures. In my opinion, there will be no unnecessary wear as lubrication continues normally. You get the benefit of saving some money at the pump. Honda introduced this system in 2005 and, if it didn't work, do you think that the company would still use it? Technology has come a long way since Cadillac introduced the V-8-6-4 engine that hit the roads in 1981 in an attempt to save gas during the 1979 oil crisis. That flawed engine did not last long.

Q: Concerning LB's '02 Corolla and its evap emission issue, I had a similar problem with a Camry of the same year. Turned out there was corrosion on the gas filler pipe that kept the O-ring on the gas cap from sealing. A new gas cap would fix the problem temporarily while the rubber O-ring was still new, but eventually it wears out and the trouble recurs. The fix is a new pipe from the filler to the tank.

A: Good point. I have also seen filler necks with nicks that cause the same problem. I polished them off with crocus cloth. It

MOTORMOUTH

By BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

often worked and is cheaper than a new pipe. Just be sure to stick a rag in the neck so no junk falls into the tank.

Q: You have said to follow the guidelines in the vehicle's owner's manual regardless of dealer service recommendations. What if an independent service technician tells you he would NOT replace brake fluid on his car, that it's just a dealer thing? My 2007 Honda Odyssey's manual states to replace every three years, and I'm due now.

A: I think you may have answered your own question. The dealer has an opinion (suggestion) and your mechanic has an opinion (suggestion). Follow the guidelines in your vehicle's owner's manual. After all, who knows better than the company that built the car?

Q: I wonder why plug-in electric cars don't have a small charger built into the car so you do not have to depend on an external charger. We have a cabin in northern Minnesota where we would not want to install a separate charger but could easily plug the car into a regular outside outlet for days until we were ready to return home. If I knew how to ask the auto manufacturers this question, I would ask.

A: They have already beat you to it. Essentially every electric vehicle (EV) sold today includes a portable charger that you can plug into your standard 110-volt household outlet. But it takes about 4-5 hours of charging for each hour of driving. Leaving it plugged in overnight (8 hours) will get you about 35-40 miles. If you go to the Red Lake region, at roughly 200 miles, plan to spend a few extra days fishing.

Life & Style

‘Nomadland’ wins 4 BAFTAs including best picture, director

LONDON (AP)—Gig-economy Western “Nomadland” won four prizes including best picture on Sunday at the British Academy Film Awards, which were handed out during a pandemic-curbed ceremony that recognized a diverse array of screen talent.

“Nomadland” filmmaker Chloe Zhao became only the second woman, and the first woman of color, to win the BAFTA for best director, and star Frances McDormand was named best actress. “Nomadland” also took the cinematography prize.

Emerald Fennell’s revenge comedy “Promising Young Woman” was named best British film, while the best actor trophy went to 83-year-old

Anthony Hopkins for playing a man grappling with dementia in “The Father.”

An event that was criticized in the recent past with the label #BAFTAsSoWhite rewarded a diverse group of talents, including Black British star Daniel Kaluuya, newcomer Bukky Bakray—who shone as a London teenager in “Rocks”—and veteran Korean actress Yuh-Jung Youn.

The fact that Britain remains under coronavirus lockdown measures, with its movie theaters still closed, gave the evening a poignant tone, as did the death on Friday of Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II, a long-time patron of the British film academy.

Prince William, who had



AP
In this file photo, Director Chloe Zhao, left, appears with actress Frances McDormand on the set of “Nomadland.” “Nomadland” has won four prizes, including best picture, at the British Academy Film Awards on Sunday, April 11, 2021.

directing winner was Kathryn Bigelow in 2010 for “The Hurt Locker.”

The British film academy expanded its voting membership and shook up its rules last year in an attempt to address a glaring lack of diversity in the nominations. In 2020, no women were nominated as best director for a seventh consecutive year, and all 20 nominees in the lead and supporting performer categories were white.

Under new rules that, among other things, made watching all longlisted films compulsory for academy voters, this year’s slate of acting nominees was strikingly more diverse, and four of the six filmmakers nominated for best director were women: Zhao, Sarah Gavron (“Rocks”), Shannon Murphy (“Babyteeth”) and Jasmila Zbanic (“Quo Vadis, Aida?”).

WINNERS LIST

LONDON (AP)—Winners of the 2021 British Academy Film Awards, presented Sunday:

Film—“Nomadland”

British Film—“Promising Young Woman”

Director—Chloe Zhao, “Nomadland”

Actor—Anthony Hopkins, “The Father”

Actress—Frances McDormand, “Nomadland”

Supporting Actor—Daniel Kaluuya, “Judas and the Black Messiah”

Supporting Actress—Yuh-Jung Youn, “Minari”

Rising Star—Bukky Bakray

British Debut—Director Remi Weekes, “His House”

Original Screenplay—“Promising Young Woman”

Adapted Screenplay—“The Father”

Film Not in the English Language—“Another Round”

Musical Score—“Soul”

Cinematography—“Nomadland”

Editing—“Sound of Metal”

Production Design—“Mank”

Costume Design—“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”

Sound—“Sound of Metal”

Casting—“Rocks”

Visual Effects—“Tenet”

Makeup and Hair—“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”

Animated Film—“Soul”

British Short Film—“The Present”

British Short Animation—“The Owl and the Pussycat”

Documentary—“My Octopus Teacher”

Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema—Noel Clarke

Academy Fellowship—Ang Lee

been due to attend and make a speech in his role as president of Britain’s film academy, was absent following the death of his grandfather. The ceremony opened with a tribute to Philip, who was the academy’s first president in 1959.

Presenters including Hugh Grant, Tom Hiddleston, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Priyanka Chopra Jonas announced the

winners from the stage of London’s Royal Albert Hall, but recipients accepted their honors remotely, and there was no black-tie audience to cheer them on.

Director Remi Weekes, who won the British debut prize for his first feature, “His House,” noted the surreal sensation of accepting the award while sitting in his

Chloé Zhao becomes 1st woman of color to win top DGA honor

Chloé Zhao’s “Nomadland” continued its tour of dominance through awards season Saturday night, when Zhao took top honors at the 73rd annual Directors Guild Association Awards.

She is the second woman to earn the honor and the first woman of color to do so. Kathryn Bigelow was the first for “The Hurt Locker.” And it all but solidifies her frontrunner status leading up to the Oscars on April 25.

The untelevised event was held virtually with nominees accepting over zoom calls from around the world, in lieu of the typical hotel ballroom ceremony in Beverly Hills.

Only seven times in history has the DGA winner ever not gone on to take the best director prize at the Academy Awards. Last year was a rare exception when the Guild honored “1917” director Sam Mendes and then the Oscar went to “Parasite” director Bong Joon Ho.

Zhao was up against Emerald Fennell for “Promising Young Woman,” Aaron Sorkin for “The Trial of the Chicago 7,” Lee Isaac Chung for “Minari” and David Fincher for “Mank.” The only difference in the Oscars lineup is that Sorkin is not among the nominees—instead, Thomas Vinterberg

is for “Another Round.”

Zhao’s lyrical film about transient workers in the American West starring Frances McDormand started its awards journey winning the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, the People’s Choice award at the Toronto International Film Festival, the Golden Globe for best drama and best director and the top honor from the Producer’s Guild.

The first-time directing prize went to Darius Marder for “Sound of Metal,” his innovative exploration of what happens when a drummer has severe, traumatic hearing loss. And documentary directing

was given to Gregory Kershaw and Michael Dweck for “The Truffle Hunters,” which follows a group of older men who seek out the expensive and rare white Alba truffle in the forests of Piedmont, Italy.

The Directors Guild also celebrates achievements in television directing.

Lesli Linka Glatter won the dramatic prize for her “Homeland” episode “Prisoners of War,” Susanna Fogel took the comedy honor for the “In Case of Emergency” episode of “The Flight Attendant” and Scott Frank was recognized for directing the limited series “The Queen’s Gambit.” (AP)

Man’s tattoos draw fire from disapproving wife

DEAR ABBY: My tattoos are destroying my marriage, and I just don't understand why. I'm a 56-year-old elementary art teacher and the father of three grown children. Since I was young, I have loved the artistic expression of tattoos, and I ALWAYS envisioned having them, lots of them.

It had been about 10 years since my last one, but I decided to get another one. Telling my wife about wanting another one was awful. My wife of 28 years hates tattoos. We have terrible arguments every time I get one. I have covered my entire upper body. (Other than my hands, none of them are visible while I'm wearing my work clothes.) I love them.

I just returned home with roses tattooed on my hands, and my wife is ready to leave me. She says I have gone too far with all my ink. I'm a responsible and respectful person. I don't drink, smoke, gamble or have any destructive vices. I'm highly regarded as a leader and role model at my school.

Friends, colleagues—even strangers—compliment me on my tattoos. However, you would think my tattoos and I are the devil in my wife's eyes. Am I the problem, or is her perception of tattoos the issue? Please, any advice would be greatly accepted. I can't understand her stance on this.

ART IN LAS VEGAS

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

you want with it. While not everyone is a fan of body art, I assume that you had tattoos before you and your wife married. It is possible that over the years, when you told your wife you were getting more, knowing her feelings about it, it came across to her as disrespectful of her feelings. As you have acquired more and more, it may have felt to her like one insult piled on another.

Having never spoken with your wife, I can't guess her reason for talking about leaving you, but it's important you ask why those roses were the last straw. (Am I correct in assuming there's no place else on your "canvas" that hasn't been illustrated?)

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married 20-plus years. His mother has never liked me. I have never done anything to her or her husband.

My father-in-law passed away two years back, and my mother-in-law is older. If something happens to her, how am I supposed to react? I know I have to be there for my husband. My husband and I get along wonderfully, but at the same time, I would feel like a hypocrite if I went to her funeral. We haven't spoken in over a year.

Other family members have repeated things she has said about me as well as my family. I put up with her behavior for years. I only quit talking to her or going around her a year ago.

HATES HYPOCRISY IN MICHIGAN

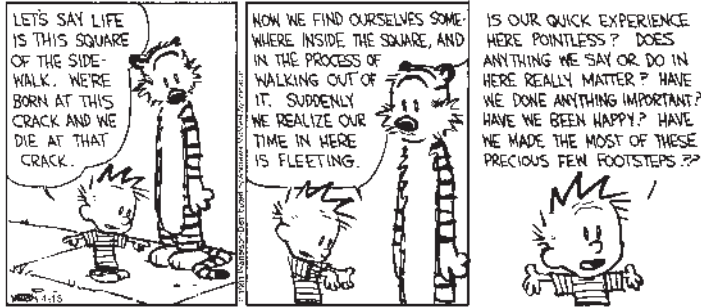
DEAR HATES: Funerals are for the living. Do not succumb to the temptation to use your mother-in-law's as a platform to demonstrate your dislike of her. Attend the funeral and comfort your husband, who likely will be hurting and need your support. And when you do, ABOVE ALL, refrain from humming, "Ding, Dong, the Witch is Dead."

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEARART: It is your body, and you have the right to do what

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



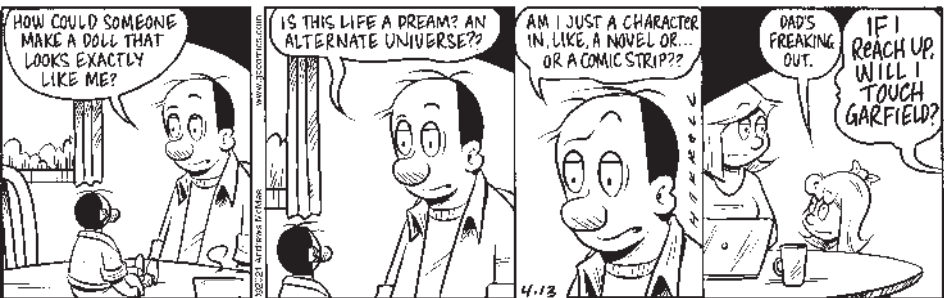
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Inventor Elias 5 Sine — non 8 Lend a hand 12 Cries of aversion 13 Coffee vessel 14 Exam format 15 Breakfast order 17 Comedian Fey 18 Shriner's cap 19 Is for you? 20 Whale's home 21 Sob 22 Season opener? 23 Utter impulsively 26 Pickle containers 30 Aviation prefix 31 Remiss 32 Writer Wiesel 33 Biblical giant

DOWN 1 Fit of anger 2 Monster 3 Brainiac 4 Jargon suffix 5 Ask about 6 Incite 7 Director Lee 8 Breakfast order 9 Toledo's lake 10 "Video Games" singer — Del Rey 11 Scheme 16 Scurry 20 Hockey's Bobby 21 Breakfast order 22 Peace (Lat.) 23 Purse 24 Author Tolstoy 25 Internet address 26 "Humbug!" 27 Golfer Ernie 28 Torched 29 Observe 31 British "Inc." 34 Hot tub reaction 35 Pear variety 37 Bamboo eater 38 Armed conflicts 39 Author Hunter 40 Ovid's 53 41 Pace 42 Tom Joad, for one 43 Geese formations 44 Admin. aide 46 Shriner of tennis 47 Wood-shaping tool

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-13

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Allison Williams, 33; Lorenzo Cain, 35; Rick Schroder, 51; Jaymz Bee, 58.

Happy Birthday: Stay focused and be receptive to possibilities. When one door closes, another will open. Learn to go with the flow, and you will find it easy to get ahead. A steady pace forward will make a lasting impression on people who can help you advance. Don't limit what you can achieve because you don't know how to say no. Your numbers are 8, 14, 21, 25, 33, 41, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A situation will not be what it appears. Don't jump to conclusions or lose sight of your goal because someone says or does something you don't like. Do your own thing, and focus on success, peace of mind and happiness.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Impulse is the enemy. Plan your actions, and dedicate time to reaching your objective. Put your energy where it counts, and your income will increase. Don't let an outsider take over when it's in your best interest to handle matters yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Gather information before you make a move or spend unnecessarily. Expect someone who has ulterior motives to mislead you. Think for yourself and take action based on facts, intelligence and what you will achieve. Live life your way.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll get the help you want, but before you accept, consider the payoff. Don't put yourself

in a precarious position, regardless of the temptation. Someone is waiting for you to make a mistake or show weakness. Be strong, innovative and competent.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Stop laboring over what others are doing. Consider what you want and figure out a way to follow a path that satisfies your needs. Discipline will help you excel and lead to opportunities that will buy you freedom and peace of mind.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Learn from the changes you've experienced, then proceed with confidence. Knowing what you want will make it easier for you to put what ever stands in your way aside so that you can excel. Don't take health, financial or legal risks.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Pay more attention to what's going on around you. Gather and verify information that will help you decipher who and what's best for you. A partnership that is based on equality and shared responsibilities looks promising. Romance is in the stars.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Emotions will surface if someone rejects your ideas or opinions. Step outside the confines of a situation you face and look at every angle. An innovative approach will help create a favorable condition that will turn in your favor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Tidy up loose ends. Focus on your surroundings and do what's necessary to make your space user-friendly. Use what you already have to initiate positive changes at home and to how you

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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earn your living, and it will pay off.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Listen to your friends and relatives, but in the end, do what's best for you. Taking care of your responsibilities will help put your mind at ease and deter others from interfering. Put your energy into your work and financial gains.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Refuse to let your emotions wreak havoc with your financial well-being. Unnecessary spending will not make you feel better. Use your intelligence, and put physical energy into home improvements that contribute to your ability to boost your earnings.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): An unexpected change will turn out to be what's best for you in hindsight. Don't get discouraged when incorporating what you enjoy and do best can be better used uniquely. Be an entrepreneur, and you will flourish.

Birthday Baby: You are curious, direct and inflexible. You are helpful and disciplined.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

8 6 4 3 1 8 2 7 5 9 6 4 3 1 8 2 8 6 4 1 2 5 9 3 7 2 3 1 9 7 8 5 4 6 9 8 6 4 1 2 7 5 3 3 7 2 5 9 6 8 1 4 1 4 5 3 8 7 6 2 9 6 2 7 8 5 4 3 9 1 5 1 3 2 6 9 4 7 8 4 9 8 7 3 1 2 6 5

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

7 5 9 6 4 3 1 8 2 8 6 4 1 2 5 9 3 7 2 3 1 9 7 8 5 4 6 9 8 6 4 1 2 7 5 3 3 7 2 5 9 6 8 1 4 1 4 5 3 8 7 6 2 9 6 2 7 8 5 4 3 9 1 5 1 3 2 6 9 4 7 8 4 9 8 7 3 1 2 6 5

Difficulty Level ★★ 4/13 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

GEORGE SHULTZ (1920-2021) Solution: 9 letters

E E T T O L R A H C H I N A P N I X O N E N G I E R O F E C I S B H O O V E R E L Y T C L R E E U S R E D N A X E L A I T N C C S U O N D E R E N K M C H H N R I B M T N C C S A A O O T P A E N A I I U I D H T D W E P R E G T E R L M F O H I E L U R S A A S B T F O L R P R O O F E N E R S A O W E A L F T R E A S U R Y I R N E G O S G W H N S D E P O A N R M A T I O I N E A R U A G N A A S A C O M M U N I Q U E U M T T K N G N I R E E N I G N E

© 2021 Arcview Media Syndication www.wonderword.com 4/13 Alexander, Angaur, Barbara, Bechtel, Bush, Business, Charlotte, China, Climate, Communique, Diplomat, Doctrine, East, Eisenhower, Engineering, Foreign, Four, Fund, Group, Helena, Hoover, Kathleen, Margaret, Milton, Near, Nixon, Nunn, Office, Op-Ed, Peter, Press, Proof, Reagan, Rice, Secretary, Shock, State, Taiwan, Treasury, Tyler, Union, Woods Yesterday's Answer: Stream To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 60 order on me at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Matsuyama becomes 1st Japanese in Masters green jacket



AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)—The pressure was even more than Hideki Matsuyama could have imagined when he stood on the

first tee Sunday at Augusta National. So was the emotion when he walked off the 18th green as the first Masters champion from golf-mad Japan.

His arms securely inside the sleeves of the green jacket, he thrust them in the air.

Ten years after he made a sterling debut as the best amateur at the Masters, the 29-year-old Matsuyama claimed the ultimate prize and took his place in history.

Whether he's Japan's greatest player is not his concern.

"However, I'm the first to win a major," he said through his interpreter. "And if that's the bar, then I've set it."

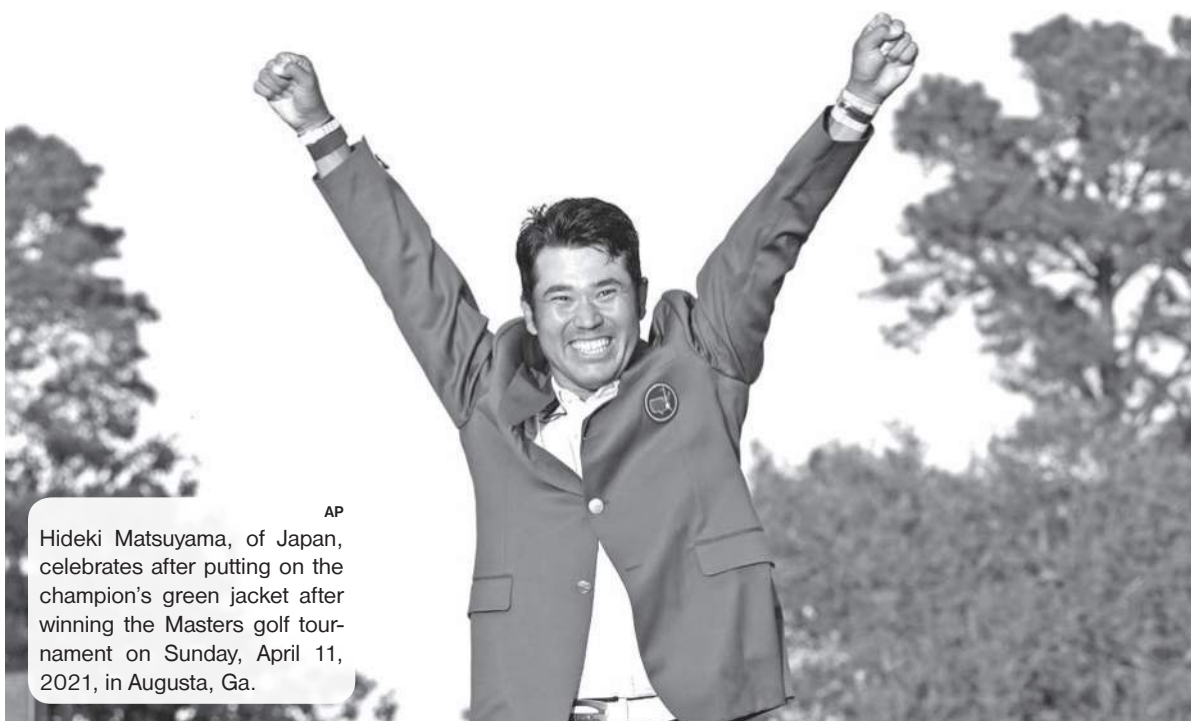
Staked to a four-shot lead, the nerves stayed with Matsuyama from the time he hit his opening tee shot into the trees to back-to-back birdies that led to a six-shot lead to a few nervous moments at the end when Xander Schauffele made a late run at him.

Only when he belted his drive down the 18th fairway and twirled the club in his hands could he feel this victory was in hand. He played so well for so long that three bogeys over the last four holes made this Masters look closer than it was.

He closed with a 1-over 73 for a one-shot victory over Masters rookie Will Zalatoris (70).

Schauffele ran off four straight birdies to get within two shots with three holes to play, only to hit 8-iron into the water on the par-3 16th for a triple bogey that ended his hopes. He shot a 72 with a triple bogey and a double bogey on his card and tied for third with Jordan Spieth (70).

"Man, he was something else. He played like a winner needs to play," Schauffele said. "Sixteen, I really would



AP
Hideki Matsuyama, of Japan, celebrates after putting on the champion's green jacket after winning the Masters golf tournament on Sunday, April 11, 2021, in Augusta, Ga.

have loved to have put more pressure on him there, but basically gave him the tournament at that point."

Then his thoughts turned to the significance of what Matsuyama achieved. Schauffele's mother was raised in Japan and his grandparents still live there.

"No one really wants to talk about how much pressure is on him," Schauffele said. "You look at the media that follows him. You look at what he's done in his career. He's a top-ranked player with a ton of pressure on him, and that's the hardest way to play. He's able to do it."

And he did it.

The emotion for a player who says so little was never more evident. Moments before Dustin Johnson helped him into the green jacket, Matsuyama needed no interpreter in Butler Cabin when he said in English, "I'm really happy."

So masterful was this performance that Matsuyama stretched his lead to six shots on the back nine until a few moments of drama. With a four-shot

lead, he went for the green in two on the par-5 15th and it bounded hard off the back slope and into the pond on the 16th hole.

Matsuyama did well to walk away with bogey, and with Schauffele making a fourth straight birdie, the lead was down to two shots. And then it was over.

Schauffele was in the water. Matsuyama made a safe par on the 17th and ripped one down the middle of the 18th fairway. He made bogey from the bunker to finish at 10-under 278, soaking in the moment with a few thousand spectators on their feet to celebrate a career-changing moment.

Spieth has competed in Japan and has played alongside Matsuyama on his home turf. He could relate to having a four-shot lead, which Spieth had when he won the Masters in 2015. He can't relate to the expectations of an entire country.

"He's got a lot of pressure on himself," Spieth said. "I remember the feeling on a four-shot lead, and he's got

Japan on his back and maybe Asia on his back. I can't imagine how that was trying to sleep on that, even with somebody who's had so much success."

Matsuyama won for the 15th time worldwide, and it was his sixth PGA Tour title. He had gone 93 tournaments without winning, the longest drought for a Masters champion since 1987, and went to No. 14 in the world.

He becomes the second man from an Asian country to win a major. Y.E. Yang of South Korea won the 2009 PGA Championship at Hazeltine over Tiger Woods.

Matsuyama won in Japan as an amateur, and four times after he graduated college and turned pro in 2013.

His first PGA Tour victory was at the Memorial in 2014, prompting tournament host Jack Nicklaus to say, "I think you've just seen the start of what's going to be truly one of your world's great players over the next 10 to 15 years."

That moment came Sunday.

Matsuyama is not big on emotion, and he speaks even less even when

cornered after every round by the large contingent of Japanese media.

Most of the media was absent this year due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, and Matsuyama had said on the eve of the final round that it has been a lot less stress.

There was plenty on the golf course, right from the start.

"I felt really good going to the first tee, until I stood on the first tee, and then it hit me that I'm in the last group of the Masters Tournament and I'm the leader by four strokes. And then I was really nervous," he said. "But I caught myself. And the plan today was just go out and do my best for 18 holes. And so that was my thought throughout day, just keep doing my best."

Matsuyama sent his opening tee shot into the trees right of the first fairway. He punched it under the trees from the pine straw, hit a soft pitch that rolled down the slope away from the pin and was happy to leave with bogey. Two groups ahead of him, Zalatoris opened with two straight birdies.

Just like that, the lead was down to one. Matsuyama quickly restored his cushion by making it through the toughest stretch on the front nine as everyone around him dropped shots. He had a five-shot lead at he turn, and Schauffele was the only one who had a serious chance at the end.

He is the first winner with a final round over par since Trevor Immelman in 2008. No matter. Matsuyama is the Masters champion, a major that defines his elite status in the game and gives Japan the biggest week it has ever had in April.

It started a week ago Saturday when Tsubasa Kajitani won the second Augusta National Women's Amateur. Matsuyama wasn't around to see it, but he was well aware of it. All he wanted was to follow her path and made Japan proud.

His play spoke volumes. So did his reaction.

Tony Snell and Kris Dunn.

Celtics have 31-3 run in comeback victory over Nuggets



DENVER (AP)—Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown fueled a 31-3 run that helped the Boston Celtics put the skids on the NBA's hottest team with a 105-87 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Sunday.

The Nuggets looked well on their way to their ninth straight victory when they took a 79-65 lead in the third quarter on a 3-pointer by Facundo Campazzo.

Boston outscored the Nuggets 40-8 the rest of the way. The Celtics had been held to 16 first-quarter points and trailed by 14 early on.

Brown started the epic run with a nifty bucket and Tatum provided the biggest highlights, including eight straight points on a trio of free throws, a jumper and a 3-pointer.

Tatum finished with 28 points two days after a career-best 53-point performance against Minnesota, and Brown had 20. Tatum (illness) and Brown (sore left knee) starred despite being listed as questionable before tip-off.

Michael Porter Jr. led Denver with 20 points. Nikola Jokic had 17 points,

11 assists and 10 rebounds.

Pelicans 116, Cavaliers 109

In Cleveland, Zion Williamson scored 38 points and Brandon Ingram had 27 points and eight assists in rallying New Orleans past Cleveland.

Williamson fell one shy of his career best of 39 set March 26 against Denver. He made 16 of 22 field goal attempts and had nine rebounds as New Orleans pulled within one game of the final play-in tournament spot in the West.

Dean Wade scored a career-high 21 points for Cleveland.

Bucks 124, Magic 87

In Orlando, Fla., Khris Middleton scored 21 points, Bobby Portis added 16 points —making four 3-pointers — and 10 rebounds and Milwaukee beat Orlando to end a three-game losing streak.

Milwaukee was again without star Giannis Antetokounmpo because of a sore left knee, but it mattered little as Middleton shot 8 of 13 from the field and added eight rebounds and five assists.

Mo Bamba scored a career-best 21 points for Orlando.

Spurs 119, Mavericks 117

In Dallas, DeMar DeRozan hit the tiebreaking jumper with 0.5 seconds left, giving him 27 of his 33 points in the second half and lifting San Antonio past Dallas.

Dejounte Murray scored 25 points as the Spurs stopped a season-long five-game losing streak while avoiding the first season sweep by their Texas rival in the 41-year history of the Dallas franchise. The Mavericks won the first two meetings.

Luka Doncic scored 29 points, including a basket for the 10th tie with 19 seconds left in a game that also had 12 lead changes.

Clippers 131, Pistons 124

In Los Angeles, Marcus Morris scored a season-high 33 points, Paul George added 32 and Los Angeles beat Detroit to cap a nine-game homestand.

Los Angeles was missing Kawhi Leonard, who sat out to rest as the Clippers were playing their third

game in four nights.

Josh Jackson scored 26 points for Detroit. Saddiq Bey added 25.

Heat 107, Trail Blazers 98

In Portland, Ore., Bam Adebayo scored 22 points and Jimmy Butler added 20 to lead Miami past Portland.

The Heat have won six of their last seven games.

CJ McCollum and Norman Powell each had with 17 points for the Trail Blazers. Damian Lillard had just 12 on an off night when he made just three shots from the field, all 3-pointers.

Hawks 105, Hornets 101

In Charlotte, N.C., Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 32 points on a career-high eight 3-pointers and Atlanta rallied to beat Charlotte without Trae Young.

Clint Capela added 20 points and 15 rebounds for the surging Hawks. They have won six of seven to take sole possession of fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

The Hawks won despite Young (left calf contusion) and reserve Danilo Gallinari (right foot soreness) sitting out along with John Collins, DeAndre Hunter, Cam Reddish,

Pacers 132, Grizzlies 125

In Memphis, Tenn., Caris LeVert scored 34 points, Malcolm Brogdon and Domantas Sabonis fell just short of triple-doubles and Indiana held off Memphis.

Brogdon had 29 points, matched his season-high with 11 assists and had nine rebounds. Sabonis finished with 18 points, 15 rebounds and nine assists, part of the Pacers grabbing a season-high 53 rebounds en route to their third straight victory.

Knicks 102, Raptors 96

In New York, Julius Randle scored 26 points and New York recovered to beat Toronto after blowing an 18-point lead.

RJ Barrett added 19 points to help the Knicks get back to .500 at 27-27 with their second straight victory.

Timberwolves 121, Bulls 117

In Minneapolis, Karl-Anthony Towns had 27 points and 12 rebounds, D'Angelo Russell scored 27 points and Minnesota beat Chicago.

Ricky Rubio connected on five of his six 3-point attempts and scored 17 points.

Martinez hits 3 HRs in return from COVID list, Bosox top O's

BALTIMORE
(AP)—J.D.

Martinez caught up in a hurry.

Martinez came off the COVID-19 list and hit three home runs, powering the Boston Red Sox past the Baltimore Orioles 14-9 Sunday for their sixth straight win.

Martinez struck out in the first inning and quickly made some adjustments.

"After that first at-bat, I felt like everything just kind of sped up on me," Martinez said. "I went to the cage and I was like, 'All right, we need to dial this up. We can get it going. Wake up.' After that, I felt a lot more in control and I felt really good."

The 33-year-old Martinez was back in the lineup one day after being placed on the COVID-19 injured list because of cold symptoms. He passed the required tests and went 4 for 6, driving in four runs and scoring four times.

Martinez got a chance at a record-tying fourth homer in the ninth inning and struck out swinging. He is the last of 18 major leaguers to homer four times in a game, doing it in September 2017 for Arizona.

This was the fourth time that Martinez has hit at least three homers in a game. A year after batting just .213 with seven home runs in 54 games during the pandemic-shortened season, he is hitting .472 (17 for 36) with five homers and 16 RBIs in eight games.

"He's locked in. You can tell," manager Alex Cora said. "This is the guy I saw in (2018 and 2019). He has an idea of what he wants to do. He doesn't deviate from his process. I think the last swing he was just hoping for a strike to see if he could hit it in the air. That wasn't the case."

Martinez hit solo homers in the third, sixth and eighth innings. The three-time All-Star also had an RBI single.

Rafael Devers homered twice and Alex Verdugo added a three-run shot for the Red Sox, who completed a three-game sweep—Boston lost three in a row to Baltimore at Fenway Park to start the season.

"I feel good obviously. I made a couple of changes here and there but I still have the same approach every single game and now things are falling in my favor," Devers said. "It feels good to be able to contribute as much as I am right now."

Dodgers 3, Nationals 0

In Los Angeles, Clayton Kershaw pitched six innings of five-hit ball to win an outstanding duel with Max Scherzer as the Dodgers finished a three-game sweep over Washington.

Rookie Zach McKinstry homered and drove in all three runs for the defending World



Boston Red Sox's J.D. Martinez, right, is greeted near home plate by Xander Bogaerts after hitting a solo home run off Baltimore Orioles starting pitcher Jorge Lopez during the third inning of a baseball game, Sunday, April 11, 2021, in Baltimore.

Series champion Dodgers, who are off to a major league-best start of 8-2 despite playing this series without injured former MVP outfielders Mookie Betts and Cody Bellinger.

Kershaw (2-1) struck out six with no walks. Scherzer (0-1) also went six innings and allowed one run on three hits.

Kenley Jansen pitched a flawless ninth for his second save.

Diamondbacks 7, Reds 0

In Phoenix, Luke Weaver retired the first 17 batters he faced and Eduardo Escobar homered for the fourth straight game for Arizona.

The 27-year-old Weaver (1-0) took a no-hitter into the seventh inning before giving up a broken-bat single to Eugenio Suárez, whose groundball found a hole up the middle. Cincinnati went into the game batting .312 as a team, tops in the majors.

Rookie Matt Peacock pitched the final two innings to complete the two-hitter.

José De León (0-1) allowed six runs over 4 1/3 innings.

Yankees 8, Rays 4

In St. Petersburg, Fla., Rowned Odor snapped a 10th-inning tie with his first hit as a Yankee, Gio Urshela homered and drove in three

runs, and New York rallied to avoid a weekend sweep.

Odor went 0 for 4 before singling in his first game since the Yankees acquired him from Texas. Urshela hit a two-run homer in the third inning and had four hits, including a two-out single in the 10th off Collin McHugh (0-1).

Aroldis Chapman (1-0) pitched a scoreless ninth and Albert Abreu got three outs.

Indians 5, Tigers 2

In Cleveland, Logan Allen (1-1) recovered from a bumpy first inning to get his first win with the Indians, allowing one run and two hits in five innings as Cleveland completed a three-game sweep.

Detroit slugger Miguel Cabrera was placed on the 10-day injured list before the game with a left biceps strain.

Emmanuel Clase, throwing over 100 mph on nearly every pitch, worked the ninth for his second save.

Jake Bauers and César Hernández drove in early runs against José Ureña (0-2), who has given up nine walks in 7 2/3 innings this season.

Pirates 7, Cubs 1

In Pittsburgh, JT Brubaker (1-0) allowed one run and four hits

in 5 1/3 innings and had the first three RBIs. His two-run single down the right-field line capped a three-run second inning and gave the Pirates a 3-1 lead.

Pittsburgh's Bryan Reynolds had the third four-hit game of his career.

Trevor Williams (1-1) was hit hard in his return to Pittsburgh, where he spent the first five seasons of his career before being released in November. He was tagged for five runs and 10 hits in 3 1/3 innings.

Phillies 7, Braves 6

In Atlanta, Didi Gregorius hit a three-run homer in Philadelphia's four-run fourth inning and had the go-ahead sacrifice fly in the ninth to help the Phillies snap Atlanta's four-game winning streak.

Alec Bohm doubled off Braves closer Will Smith to begin the ninth, advanced to third on a bunt and scored to make it 7-6 on Gregorius' fly to shallow left. Marcell Ozuna's throw bounced twice before Bohm was initially called safe — even though it appeared he didn't get his foot on the plate against catcher Travis d'Arnaud's tag attempt.

The play was reviewed and upheld, prompting fans at Truist Park to throw debris into

the outfield and causing the grounds crew to come out to pick up the trash.

Bryce Harper and Rhys Hoskins homered for the Phillies. Héctor Neris faced the minimum in the ninth to earn his second save.

Jose Alvarado (2-0) pitched the eighth to earn the win. Smith (0-2) took the loss.

Ronald Acuña Jr., Freddie Freeman and Ozzie Albies homered to power the Braves.

Brewers 9, Cardinals 3

In St. Louis, Avisail García homered for the second day in a row, this time off Daniel Ponce de Leon (1-1) in a four-run first, and Travis Shaw and Manny Piña also connected.

Brett Anderson (1-1) allowed one run and four hits in five innings for Milwaukee, which has won four of five.

Austin Dean had a two-run double for the Cardinals, who have lost two in a row after a four-game winning streak.

Mariners 8, Twins 6

In Minneapolis, Kyle Seager hit his second homer of the game, a three-run drive in the ninth off Alex Colomé (0-1) as Seattle overcame a 6-0, sixth-inning deficit.

Seager had four hits and

Taylor Trammell also homered for Seattle, which won a road series for the first time since Sept. 11-13, 2019, at Arizona. Colomé blew a save for the second time in four chances.

Drew Steckenrider (1-1) pitched a scoreless eighth, and Rafael Montero earned his second save in with a 1-2-3 ninth.

Byron Buxton has eight hits in three games to increase his batting average to .500. His 1.231 slugging percentage is tops in the majors.

Royals 4, White Sox 3

In Chicago, Michael A. Taylor scored when Garrett Crochet (0-1) misplayed Andrew Benintendi's bunt in the 10th for Chicago's second error of the day and ninth in nine games this season.

Greg Holland (1-1) pitched two scoreless innings, and Kyle Zimmer worked a perfect 10th for his first career save.

Chicago had won 17 straight games when its opponent started a left-handed pitcher, one shy of the major league record set by Atlanta from 2004-05.

Padres 2, Rangers 0

In Arlington, Texas, Trent Grisham homered in the fourth off Mike Foltyniewicz (0-2), and Manny Machado in the ninth against Ian Kennedy as San Diego completed a three-game sweep.

Craig Stammen (1-1) allowed one hit in 3 1/3 scoreless innings to lead six relievers after starter Adrian Morejon left after two outs because of an elbow/forearm strain.

Taylor Williams, Tim Hill, Austin Adams, Emilio Pagan and Mark Melancon followed Stammen as the Padres held Texas to five hits, three walks and two hit batters while striking out 10. Melancon is 5 for 5 in save chances.

Giants 4, Rockies 0

In San Francisco, Anthony DeSclafani and three relievers combined to scatter eight hits as San Francisco Giants swept Colorado.

DeSclafani (1-0) struck out eight and gave up six hits in six innings.

Brandon Belt homered for the first time this season and Alex Dickerson also connected for the Giants. Evan Longoria had two hits and two RBIs.

Germán Márquez (0-1) allowed three runs and six hits in 5 2/3 innings.

Mets still not capitalizing on deGrom's excellence

The new-look Mets have a familiar problem so far: Even when Jacob deGrom is on the mound, they're surprisingly beatable.

DeGrom struck out 14 on Saturday, but New York lost 3-0 to the Miami Marlins. In his other start this season, deGrom held Philadelphia scoreless for six innings, but the Mets gave up five runs in the eighth and lost 5-3.

Whether it's blamed on poor run support or shaky re-

lief pitching, New York hasn't taken advantage of deGrom's brilliance the last few years. The right-hander won the Cy Young Award in both 2018 and 2019, but since the start of the 2018 season, he's just 25-20 despite posting a stellar 2.06 ERA. He has 33 no-decisions in that span, and the Mets have lost 22 of those games.

Among the pitchers who have more wins than deGrom since the start of 2018: Marco Gonzales (36-25 with a 4.00

ERA), Jon Lester (34-19, 4.06), Rick Porcello (32-26, 4.98) and J.A. Happ (31-16, 4.13).

What's remarkable is that over the past three-plus seasons, the Mets have been mediocre, but they haven't been terrible. They're seven games under .500 in that time frame, so it's not as though deGrom has been pitching for a constant cellar dweller.

But when he's on the mound, New York's offense has been abysmal at times.

DeGrom has received 4.10 runs of support per nine innings since the start of 2018, according to fangraphs.com. Only three pitchers with over 300 innings in that span—Cole Hamels, Madison Bumgarner and Derek Holland—have received less run support than deGrom.

Perhaps the addition of Francisco Lindor will help this year, but so far it's been the same old story for the Mets and their ace. (AP)

Shirley's players lead in Golden Boot race

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Shirley's Football Club's Katrina Costales, center, tries to dribble away from two Southern United FC defenders during an earlier game in Division A of the Dove Women's Spring League 2021 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

28 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville. Then in their second game last March 7, Costales, who also plays for the CNMI Women's National Team, delivered a hat-trick to power Shirley's to an 8-0 triumph over TanHoldings FC. The 18-year-old athlete did not score in their close win over Kanoa Football Club, 2-1, last March 14, but was back on the board when she made one in their 3-1 victory against Southern United last March 21.

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paddling athletes and to host our paddling sisters and brothers from the Pacific region.... it will be a memorable time for us all.....and our federation looks forward to the work ahead to ensure hosting of va'a is successful," said Andrew.

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Federation president and many time CNMI National Tennis coach Jeff Race said he couldn't be more delighted in seeing his sport participate in the 2022 Mini Games.

"That's great to hear. We will put on a tennis event to remember. The core of our team from the 2019 Games will be returning and they should be even better than they were then. I believe that there are medals in the CNMI teams future at these Games," he said.

CNMI Weightlifting president John Davis, for his part, said he's happy to find out that his sport is finally back in the Mini Games following a two-year wait.

"We're all smiles and giggles after learning of the decision that weightlifting is back in the sports calendar of the 2020 Pacific Mini Games... It really means a great deal to our federation especially in the heels of our suspension from the IWF (International Weightlifting Federation) being lifted... Now, we get to work and we will get it done to host a successful weightlifting event," he said.

The CNMI originally backed out from hosting the then 2021 Pacific Mini Games following the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yutu in 2017. The CNMI was then persuaded to continue with its hosting duties following an agreement with the Pacific Games Council that it will be holding a scaled-down Mini Games instead with the budget decreasing from \$8 million to \$3 million.

Before the re-inclusion of tennis, weightlifting, and va'a, the events calendar for the 2022 Mini Games was made up of only athletics, baseball, badminton, beach volleyball, golf, and triathlon.



Costales is ahead with three goals against Southern United's Kathlyn Chavez and Britany Wally Kanoa's Irish Pagarao.

Chavez earned twin goals in their 6-7 loss to Shirley's during the season opening late February and knocked down one apiece in their game against Kanoa (3-3), and TanHoldings (9-1). Wally also tallied on goal apiece in their Shirley's and TanHoldings and got two versus Kanoa. Pagarao matched Wally and Chavez's four goals as the Kanoa striker registered two in their 7-3 win against TanHoldings and another pair when they forced Southern United to a draw last month.

Meanwhile, nine players recorded three goals apiece in four games. The list includes Kanoa's Krizel Tuazon and Khristelle Itaas, Shirley's Lilian Podziewski, Fiona Bucalig, Jerilyn Castillo, and Julianne Hall,



Paire Football Club-1's Natalie Hill-Beyer, right, maneuvers her way out of the defense of a Matansa Football Club player during their Masters Division match in the Dove Women's Spring League 2021 last month at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Southern United's Jannah Casarino and Summer Manahane, and TanHoldings' Mia Abuan.

In Division B, Jeraldine Castillo has earned nine goals to notch the top spot. She had three goals each in their 4-0 win over MP United last March 7 and in their 5-3 triumph over

TanHoldings. Earlier in the season opening game, Jeraldine fired twin goals in their 5-2 victory against Southern United, while her other goal (one) came in their 5-1 win versus Kanoa last March 28.

Two goals behind Jeraldine at second place is Southern

United's Keisha Deleon Guerrero, who had two goals apiece in their first three matches (against Shirley's, Kanoa, and MP United) before netting one versus TanHoldings.

Tied for third place in the Golden Boot race in Division B are Deleon Guerrero's teammate Megan Elayda and TanHoldings' Julie Anne Capayas, who have four goals apiece.

Close battle in Masters

Four players are in a tight race for the Golden Boot honors with Paire Football Club 2's Tanuja Edvalson on top with four goals, just slightly ahead of Paire FC-1's Linday Davis and Natalie Hill-Beyer and Matansa FC's Bunruang Brasuelle.

Edvalson scored all her goals in their 4-1 win over TanHoldings during the first game of the season. Davis' lone goal in the opener gave Paire-1 the victory over Kanoa and then she made two in their 4-1 win against TanHoldings. Hill-Beyer, on the other hand, notched one goal apiece versus Matansa, TanHoldings, and Paire-2.

Brasuelle joined the three-way tie for second place when she bagged a goal in their 1-2 loss to TanHoldings last March 28 to go with the pair she logged in their shutout win over Kanoa, 3-0.

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into uncontested fastbreak layups and wide-open 3-pointers. As a result, the point difference really got out of hand with Richardson free to pass to his sharpshooting teammates and rebounding to his heart's content all the misfiring Sonics' errant attempts en route to dishing out 11 assists and hauling down 15 rebounds on top of his 11 points.

Dela Cruz top-scored for the U19 champions with 27 points, while Atalig backstopped him with 21 of his own. The Sonics were led by Kim's 19 points and 8 rebounds, while Regular Season MVP Khristian Itaas had a quiet 16 markers with 10 rebounds, 6 assists, and 3 steals.

Coach Diaz, who founded the then-Garapan Rollers more than 20 years ago, said he couldn't be prouder of his players for not letting up against the Sonics.

"I'm so proud of our boys as we play as a team. Most of them have been playing together for years and I just told them 'let's focus on defense first and our offense will be there.' I also told each of them to know their role on the team, meaning if your position is center then play your position as we need to control the rebounds."

He also have kudos to Richardson for posting a rare triple-double in the finals. "He's the best two-way guard in our club and I'm proud of him. I did not even know that he had triple-double. After our two-hour team practices, he will still stay back and work harder in his individual skills."

In the awards ceremony immediately following the U17 championship game, Regular Season MVP Itaas was named Scoring Champ (46) and King of Assists (13), King of Steals was Ol'Aces' Albert Atan (13), King of Rebounds was Rollers White's Jimmy Jecino (25), and King

of Blocks was Rollers Black's Jeff Sagum (5).

Coach Diaz also thanked Rollers Black's major sponsor, Pacific Amusement Co., for supplying their dry-fit shirts. He also thanked House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), vice speaker Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan), floor leader Rep. Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan), and Reps. Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan), Denita K. Yangetmai (D-Saipan), John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), and Joseph A. Flores (Ind-Saipan) for sponsoring the trophies and medals for RBA's 2021 Spring Madness League.

Rollers Black 92 – Dela Cruz 27, Atalig 21, Richardson 11, Mizutani 10, Lahara 7, King 6, Sagum 4, Deleon Guerrero 4.

Sonics 54 – Kim 19, Itaas 16, Francisco 7, Bravo 4, Elchico 4, Mendiola 3, Contreras 2.

Scoring by halves: 47-29, 92-54.

HOPWOOD

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seed to finally bring home the girls perpetual trophy back to Afetna.

Riding high from their clutch win against SIS 1, Hopwood tattooed the volleyball all over Tanapag's side of the court to win the first set in a laughter, 21-8. The Lady Tatagas woke up a bit on the second set, engaging the Lady Hilitais in a virtual dogfight before the former prevailed, 21-18. It was more of the same in the third and final set, as Hopwood erased Tanapag's thrice-to-beat advantage by winning in a nail-biter, 21-19.

Camacho, the CNMI Hall of Famer barking instruction to players in the Hopwood sidelines, attributed their finals win to her team's perseverance all throughout the season.

"My team worked so hard at practice and persevered throughout this tournament. I have to give them credit for

never giving up. I knew my team was more skillful. I never doubted them from the beginning. They played extremely well yesterday, like how they should. However, we had miscommunications and errors that cost us our first loss this morning to TMS. We managed to correct our errors and fought through," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Hopwood players, which were composed of two 8th graders and two 7th graders, also followed Camacho's instructions to the T and that proved the recipe for their success in the tournament.

"If you watched my girls play, you can tell that they were the only team playing '3,' bump, set, and spike. I love teaching and coaching kids, especially in the middle school level. I want to thank the other coaches, Mr. Manny Ogarto and Mr. Norman Deleon Guerrero and the HMS parents and staff that came out to support our team."

What made Hopwood's victory a lot sweeter for Camacho

is that older brother and fellow CNMI Hall of Famer, Peter, was also on the field that day, serving as one of the assistant coaches of boys champion Tanapag Middle School. "It was crazy that my brother was coaching the other winning team."

Hopwood began the one-day tournament with a win over SIS 1 and then followed that up by vanquishing Francisco M. Sablan Middle School 1. They then lost to Tanapag before outlasting SIS 1 in the semifinals to arrange the title showdown with the Lady Tatagas.

Before ultimately succumbing to Hopwood in the finals, Tanapag blazed a trail in the elimination round, beating Tinian Middle School, Dandan Middle School 1, SIS 1, and then Hopwood.

The 2021 boys and girls Middle School Grass Volleyball League was organized by Nick Gross, Public School System athletic director, with help from the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association.



**Matsuyama
becomes
1st Japanese
in Masters
green jacket**
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Saipan Tribune Sports

**Martinez hits
3 HRs in return
from COVID list,
Bosox top O's**

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20 TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2021

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

By **MARK RABAGO**
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Pacific Games Council has approved the CNMI's request to include three more sports—tennis, weightlifting, and va'a (outrigger canoe)—to the calendar of events for the 2022 Pacific Mini Games in the CNMI.

Andrew Minogue, Pacific Games Council chief executive officer, confirmed the council's decision to approve the CNMI's request following the local government's financial commitment of \$4 million in the staging of the quadrennial event from July 17 to 25 next year.

Inclusion of 3 sports in 2022 Mini Games approved

"The Pacific Games Council is delighted to agree to the request of Gov. [Ralph DLG] Torres and [the Northern Marianas Sports Association] to add three sports back onto the program for the 2022 Pacific Mini Games in the CNMI. Tennis, va'a, and weightlifting were removed after the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu when all efforts were made to keep the Games alive with a reduced sports program. PGC is very grateful to Gov. Torres for finding the additional funds that will enable these three sports to be

hosted once more," he said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Minogue said there will be 24 nations expected to send athletes in the 11th staging of the Pacific Mini Games. This includes the 22 full members of the Pacific Games Council—American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue,



Minogue



Norfolk Island, New Caledonia, the CNMI, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna—plus its two associate members—Australia and New Zealand.

The Pacific Games Council's decision to reinstate tennis, weightlifting, and va'a to the calendar events of next year's Mini

Games was welcomed by all three sports federations.

Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation president Justin Andrew said they are proud to be included in the CNMI's first-ever hosting of the Mini Games.

"We are super excited about this and the NMNPSF has started the leg to ensure successful hosting of va'a in the Mini Games. It's the CNMI's first hosting of the Mini Games and we look forward to having regional athletes come and compete in our pristine lagoon. We are also excited

about what the legacy of having va'a in the Mini Games will leave for us...the future of the sport in the CNMI can only be brighter with this," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

He also extended NMNPSF's gratitude to Torres and the Pacific Games Council for their decision to include va'a in the Mini Games sports calendar.

"We thank our governor and his leadership for making this happen. We also thank the Pacific Games Council and everyone else for this opportunity to showcase our local

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Rollers Black are U19 champions



MARK RABAGO

Rollers Black players and coach Joe Diaz pose for a group photo after winning the U17 championship of the Rollers Basketball Association 2021 Spring Madness League last Sunday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.



MARK RABAGO

Rollers Black's Matthew Richardson tries a chase-down block on Sonics' Tony Kim in the finals of the Rollers Basketball Association 2021 Spring Madness League U17 last Sunday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

By **MARK RABAGO**
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Finals MVP Matthew Richardson messed around and got a triple double to lead Rollers Black to a 92-54 shellacking of Sonics in the Rollers Basketball Association 2021 Spring Madness League U17 championship game last Sunday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

Only needing to win one game to wrap up the age group championship, the Rollers Black of coach



Dela Cruz and Derrick Atalig shooting the lights out from everywhere in the court.

By the time the first half of action was done, Rollers Black had already beaten the off-form Sonics black and blue as they led by 18 big points, 47-29. At that point, Richardson was already halfway from a triple double with

8 points, 7 rebounds, and 6 assists. Tony Kim, tried his best to keep the Sonics' heads above water, firing 10 points in the first half.

Rollers Black went super-sonic against the Sonics in the second half, as they parlayed turnover after turnover and missed shots by the Sonics

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Hopwood takes grass v-ball tiara

By **MARK RABAGO**
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Hopwood Middle School prevented a Tanapag Middle School sweep in the 2021 Middle School Grass Volleyball League by winning the girls championship last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

The girls of coach Connie Camacho lost to the

same team earlier in the semifinals to drop to the loser's bracket finals against Saipan International School 1. The Lady Hilitais quickly recovered from the three-set loss to Tanapag by pouring their ire on the Lady Geckos as they outlasted them in another three-set thriller.

Team captain Rizza Re-

lucio, Elisha Henzon, Juliana Magtalas, Drenalyn Castro, Kialeen Leemarvin, and Angilysha Punzalan then swam upstream in the championship game

against the Lady Tatagas, surviving three do-or-die matches against the No. 1

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MARK RABAGO

Hopwood Middle School players and coaches receive their perpetual plaque from Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association president Somia Quan, left standing, after winning the 2021 Middle School Grass Volleyball League by winning the girls championship last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.